



AUTOWEEK

FEBRUARY 22, 2016

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2016

RACING PREVIEW

CRAIN

THE TALE OF THE ALL-NEW
2016 MALIBU

AS TOLD FROM AN ENGINEERING AND DESIGN PERSPECTIVE.

We sat down with designers Mike Pevovar and Crystal Windham, and integration manager Lance Johnstone to talk about the innovation that went into developing the next-generation Malibu.



Malibu Premier with 2.0L engine offers a GM estimated 32 MPG highway. Official EPA estimates not yet available.





MIKE PEVOVAR & CRYSTAL WINDHAM

EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR DESIGN DIRECTORS

In terms of design, what are some defining features of the all-new Malibu?

Mike: The Chevrolet Malibu has a road presence that balances form and function in a way that will turn heads. When creating the “new face of Chevy,” the grille, headlamps and daytime running lamps all laid the foundation for the expressive, windswept body lines. The design is assertive and confident, as emphasized by its solidly planted stance. Long, dramatically sweeping surfaces really make Malibu stand out from the crowd. The whole vehicle feels tidy and taut — something you could throw around a little.

Crystal: Malibu interior design is all about maximizing comfort with style. The instrument panel is down and away for more driver space, but the available touch-screen is up to 8 inches. We offset and slightly floated the screen to use space better. That’s pretty daring for this market, but glare and reach are optimized for a driver. Also, the softest materials are closest to the customers, and the details are outstanding — lots of inserts and accents of different textured leather appointments,

intricate stitching — it’s taking those expressive zones and adding more. We want to surprise people, not just the first time, but the second time, third time — like, “Wow ... they have this little pocket here for my umbrella!” and “Wow ... so this is what my car looks like at night!”

How do interior and exterior design elements of the all-new Malibu complement each other?

Mike: The extra 1.3 inches of rear leg room set the stage for exterior design — it stretched everything, so we used that to set up body proportions to make the vehicle look lower, longer and wider. Also, the sixth rear quarter panel window not only increases visibility and brings more sunlight inside, it helps make the car look lighter, more airy and more spacious from the outside.

Crystal: When you start with a solid exterior foundation with correct proportions, the interior design architecture comes together naturally, and we can focus on improving visibility and comfort. I always say the exterior draws you in, but the interior keeps you there. Drivers spend so much time in their car, so it should feel like a second home.

“We want to surprise people, not just the first time, but the second time, third time...”

Crystal Windham, INTERIOR DESIGN DIRECTOR



LANCE JOHNSTONE

VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE INTEGRATION MANAGER

The 2016 Malibu is quieter, offers improved mileage and better handling. How could you improve Malibu on so many dimensions simultaneously?

The key is integration — working with all of the vehicle components and vehicle teams simultaneously to create the lightest, best performing structure for the vehicle. The ultimate goal was to design Malibu with surprising MPG with less mass, but no reduction in performance. Integration allowed us to work through all of the consequences of using one part or another, and combining components. It allowed us to optimize more and compromise less, and it really paid off in the all-new Malibu. We were able to remove nearly 300 pounds from the vehicle — making it the lightest vehicle in its class, all the while offering an estimated 37 MPG highway!

What technologies aided in optimizing vehicle integration with the Malibu design team?

Computer-assisted engineering has progressed to the point where it allowed us to explore and virtually evaluate more design alternatives for the new Malibu than ever before. This gave us new insights by showing us how these alternative designs for the vehicle structure could improve performance across numerous different vehicle-performance dimensions. These internal structural improvements then paved the way for new external design considerations and possibilities. The engineering improvements optimized performance and mass, enabling MPG and also had an impact on the exterior’s great design.





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FEBRUARY 22, 2016



RACING TIME!

NASCAR is just the beginning of what's ahead. We recap 2015, make bold predictions for 2016 and reveal the schedules, our top picks and ones to watch.

COVER PHOTO BY BRET KELLEY/INDYCAR MEDIA; ABOVE PHOTO BY ACTION SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY INC.

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ONLY ON
AUTOWEEK.COM

COMEBACK CAR

Yep, it's true—the 2017 DeLorean DMC-12 is happening: bit.ly/aw-dmc12

HAIL TO THE CHIEF

See why the Bowlus Road Chief may be the ultimate travel trailer: bit.ly/aw-bowlus



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THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

2016 Jaguar XF S vehicle shown. *Class is cars sold by luxury automobile brands and claim is based on total package of warranty, maintenance and other coverage programs. For complete details regarding Jaguar EliteCare coverage, please visit JAGUARUSA.COM, call 1.800.4.JAGUAR or visit your local Jaguar Retailer. © 2015 JAGUAR LAND ROVER NORTH AMERICA, LLC

TRUTH & BEAUTY

COOL RUNNINGS, COOL CASH

■ Formula One teen hotshot Max Verstappen breaks out chains during an F1 Showrun at the Hahnenkamm in Kitzbühel, Austria, on Jan. 14. The ski-slope stunt, while surely a hit for those in attendance, didn't amuse local government officials, who reportedly fined Red Bull Racing \$32,000 for failing to get permission to drive a race car on the Austrian Alps.

Photo by Philip Platzer/Red Bull Content Pool





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PROUD PARTNER



LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC

BODYSURFING OUR WAY INTO THE RACING SEASON

TEAM OWNER CHIP GANASSI bodysurfing off the podium following Ganassi Racing driver Scott Dixon's win at Sonoma Raceway in August to capture the Verizon IndyCar Series championship was one of the 2015 racing season's enduring images.

I mean, seriously, how cool would it be if you could bodysurf across your office after making a deadline, finishing the shift at the plant or closing that big deal?

If anything, we were at least slightly disappointed when we didn't see Indianapolis Star writer and longtime Autoweek contributor Curt Cavin in any photos from Sonoma with his hands in the air waiting to help the 57-year-old Ganassi along his way. We'll make sure to assign that story to our guy in the trenches this year.

So, who will bodysurf in 2016?

In this issue of Autoweek, we borrow a little inspiration from the ghosts of Competition Press for some old-school, wall-to-wall racing coverage. In addition to key storylines and schedules for all the major series, we take a final look at 2015, open the envelope on our picks to win it all (sorry if we put the jinx on you, John Force) and make some bold predictions sure to go wrong for 2016.

And don't miss the back page for an exclusive first look at some Formula One changes we see on the horizon,

since the Americans—namely the Haas F1 Team—are back in the game. Hint: Reader Jake Shafer kind of beat us to the punchline on one item, commenting on an Autoweek Facebook post recently about F1 losing its champagne sponsor: "Man, they just need to have the Champagne of Beers, Miller High Life."

As for '16, it's hard not to get excited about a racing season that includes the Indianapolis 500's 100th running; celebrating 50 years of both Team Penske and NHRA Funny Cars; and new looks for racing meccas in Indianapolis and Daytona Beach, Florida.

The championship formats are also getting a makeover in the NASCAR Xfinity and Camping World Truck series. Those two series go to a postseason Chase format similar to the one that has added quite a bit of spice to the Sprint Cup Series (or, as Autoweek Twitter follower @Johnplayer9 posted, "How many extra commercials will @NASCAR sell for each race?"). Of course, we would love to tell you, @Johnplayer9, but we used up what little magic we had in our crystal ball on this year's racing preview.

Enough of the pregame show—let's drop the green flag, already!

—mpryson@autoweek.com

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DRIVING WITH A Target ON HIS BACK

REIGNING CHAMP SCOTT DIXON POISED FOR AN INDYCAR ENCORE

BY CURT CAVIN

Scott Dixon's win in last season's final IndyCar Series race was the 38th of his career. Sound like a lot? It does in this sense.

The drivers ahead of him on the all-time list have these last names: Foyt, Andretti and Unser.

That's it. That's the list.

"It already sounds kind of weird," Dixon said.

It also might not be the order for long. The 35-year-old Dixon enters the upcoming season one win from tying Al Unser for fourth place. With four wins, he catches Michael Andretti.

Given that Dixon has averaged 3.6 wins a year since 2007, it's conceivable that he'll reach Mario Andretti's second-place level—52 wins—well ahead of his 40th birthday.

We'll go ahead and say it: Wow!

"I think (this) year is my 15th year with Ganassi and Target," Dixon said. "It's kind of astounding to see what we've achieved together; all but one (of my) races have been won with this team."

Dixon's first win, then in Champ Car, was with PacWest back in 2001.

Dixon has literally grown up before

our very eyes. He still wasn't of legal drinking age when he debuted with Bruce McCaw's team, but it seems consistency has defined his career.

The Kiwi has wins in 11 consecutive seasons—a mark that ties him with Bobby Unser, Emerson Fittipaldi and Hélio Castroneves—and he has finished in the top three in the standings a mind-boggling nine straight years. Dixon's first series championship came way back in 2003, the second five years later, the third five years after that. The fourth was the most surprising.

Last season seemed to be controlled at every turn by Juan Pablo Montoya, who after winning the opening race in St. Petersburg, Florida, held the top spot until Dixon crossed the finish line at the finale at Sonoma Raceway. Dixon's



"I knew we had the opportunity to win the race, but ultimately to have everything go the way that it did and how dramatic it was, with tied points and winning (the title) with most wins, it was crazy."

—Scott Dixon

DON'T FORGET TEAM PENSKE

DISAPPOINTING FINISH IN 2015 FUELS TEAM ON COMEBACK TRAIL

■ REMEMBER WHEN IT WAS FEARED Team Penske might win every IndyCar Series race in 2015?

That seems so long ago now, especially after only two of Roger Penske's four drivers won races last year, and the combination produced only three wins.

IndyCar's largest and best-funded organization didn't even win the championship as Scott Dixon swiped the trophy from under Juan Pablo Montoya's nose.

Yes, Montoya won the Indianapolis 500, extending Penske's record number of such wins to 16, so that assured a successful season, but the team's investment was too great not to win the championship, too. By that definition, 2015 was a disappointment.

Montoya returns for a third season. He figures to win at least two races, and he should again be one of the frontrunners at Indy. Then there's 2014 series champion Will Power (one win last year), perennial contender Hélio Castroneves and Simon Pagenaud. The combination has 72 career race wins, 54 with Team Penske.

Power won a series-high six poles last year to push his career total to 26. In addition to winning the Indianapolis road race, he finished second to Montoya in the 500.

Castroneves remains strong. A record-tying fourth 500 victory is not out of the question. Pagenaud should be better in Year Two with Team Penske, so don't feel sorry for this group. It won't win every race, but it figures to win more than three.

—CC

win, coupled with Montoya's sixth-place finish in that race, left them tied in series points. Dixon won the title based on having more wins during the season, three to two.

"It was definitely unexpected," Dixon said. "When you go into a race weekend somewhat out of (the championship), you know a lot of things have to go right. I knew we had the opportunity to win the race, but ultimately to have everything go the way that it did and how dramatic it was, with tied points and winning (the title) with most wins, it was crazy.

"For me, it was probably the sweetest just because it was so unexpected. To see the excitement on the team and Sonoma being such a popular race for Target—they had almost 500 guests

there—that was a nice way to top off the end of the year."

Dixon is capable of an encore, too, because over time he has proven to be as versatile as IndyCar. Once just known as a road racer, he added a second career Indianapolis 500 pole in 2015. While it doesn't seem like Indianapolis Motor Speedway is Dixon's best track, he has a win (2008), two seconds and six top-five finishes in 13 starts in the 500. Would you believe he has wins at 11 other oval tracks?

Would you also believe IndyCar's all-time wins list is headed by Foyt, the Andrettis, an Unser and now Dixon? That order figures to change soon. 🏆

Curt Cavin is an Indianapolis Star staff writer.



LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC (5)

2015 RECAP

■ **NOT EVEN SCOTT DIXON**, the series champion, can reflect on last season without starting with Justin Wilson, the veteran driver who was lost Aug. 24, a day after debris from another car struck his helmet at Pocono Raceway.

Wilson wasn't even involved in Sage Karam's crash; his car was 12th through the accident scene, but Karam's dislodged nose cone simply bounced wrong.

IndyCar nearly had two fatalities during the season. Only quick work by rescuers kept James Hinchcliffe from bleeding to death from a suspension piece piercing his upper left thigh in a May 18 crash at Indy.

Juan Pablo Montoya led the series from the end of the first race, a win in St. Petersburg, Florida, until Dixon tied him in points by winning the season-ending race at Sonoma Raceway. The tiebreaker was most wins, which gave Dixon the fourth title of his career.

Dixon won three races; Montoya had two wins.

TEAMS/DRIVERS

CHEVROLET TEAMS

- **CFH Racing:** Josef Newgarden, Ed Carpenter on the ovals
- **Ganassi Racing:** Scott Dixon, Tony Kanaan, Charlie Kimball
- **KVSH:** Likely Sébastien Bourdais, Matthew Brabham in two races
- **Team Penske:** Hélio Castroneves, Juan Pablo Montoya, Simon Pagenaud, Will Power

HONDA TEAMS

- **A.J. Foyt Racing:** Jack Hawksworth, Takuma Sato
- **Andretti Autosport:** Marco Andretti, Ryan Hunter-Reay, Carlos Muñoz
- **Bryan Herta Autosport:** Gabby Chaves
- **Dale Coyne Racing:** Conor Daly, second driver TBD, Bryan Clauson and Pippa Mann at Indy
- **Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing:** Graham Rahal, Spencer Pigot at three races
- **Schmidt Peterson Motorsports:** Mikhail Aleshin, James Hinchcliffe



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ **Conor Daly** has six IndyCar starts over two seasons, so he won't be a true rookie like Spencer Pigot and Matthew Brabham. But this is Daly's first chance to start and end an IndyCar season with the same team. Dale Coyne has entrusted the team's lead car with Derek Daly's son, and Daly figures to deliver. He could finish in the top 10.



OUR PICK

■ **Scott Dixon.** Yes, he becomes a five-time champion, defending his 2015 Verizon IndyCar Series title to go back to back. Why? He will have a better year than he had in 2015—when he won three times—and he still has a Chevrolet, the powerplant of choice.



ON THE RISE

■ **Josef Newgarden** figures to take another step forward in his pursuit of a championship. He won a pair of races for CFH Racing in 2015 (at Barber Motorsports Park in a terrific duel with Graham Rahal and in Toronto), and this year he will basically be auditioning for either Chip Ganassi or Roger Penske. It's expected he will drive for one of them in 2017.



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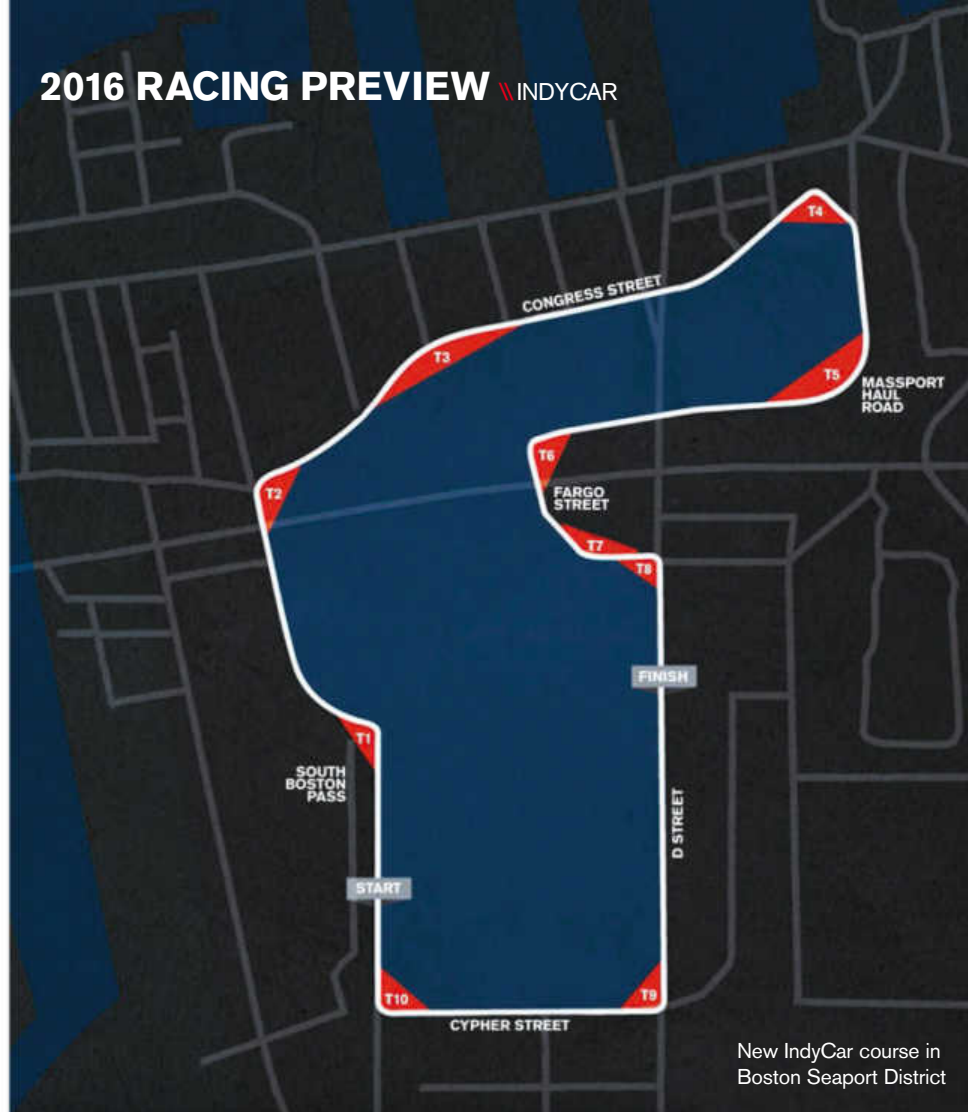
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NEW LOOK TO INDYCAR SCHEDULE

BOSTON, PHOENIX, ROAD AMERICA SPICE 2016 SLATE

■ LEAVE IT TO THE INDYCAR SERIES TO again change direction.

Instead of returning to the Milwaukee Mile, Auto Club Speedway and NOLA Motorsports Park (after only one year), as the schedule saw in 2015, this year's 16-race journey will go to three new locations.

Actually, only one of them is new: the street circuit in Boston's Seaport District (Sept. 2-4). Phoenix International Raceway (April 1-2) and Road America (June 24-26) return for the first time since 2005 and 2007, respectively.

This might not be a big deal if IndyCar didn't rearrange its schedule seemingly at every opportunity. Not including the venues used by Champ Car, IndyCar has raced at 36 places since 1996—and that doesn't count two different kinds of races at Indianapolis and Motegi, Japan, plus double-header weekends in three cities (Detroit, Toronto and Houston).

At least returns to Phoenix and Road America have generated excitement within the fan base, and if the new business model IndyCar is touting (but not revealing) for the Phoenix event is successful, other International Speedway Corp. tracks could be in line for again hosting races. That bodes well for tracks such as Chicagoland Speedway, Kansas Speedway and maybe Watkins Glen International.

Gateway Motorsports Park (outside St. Louis) isn't an ISC-owned track, but it's another place IndyCar is eyeing for a return in 2017. Another possible '17 stop: Calgary, where IndyCar team owner Ric Peterson is from.

—CC

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Honda not only wins more than five races, it wins the Indianapolis 500.
- Marco Andretti puts an end to his family's drought at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.
- Simon Pagenaud wins a series-leading four races.

2015 VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

1.	Scott Dixon	556
2.	Juan Pablo Montoya	556
3.	Will Power	493
4.	Graham Rahal	490
5.	Hélio Castroneves	453
6.	Ryan Hunter-Reay	436
7.	Josef Newgarden	431
8.	Tony Kanaan	431
9.	Marco Andretti	429
10.	Sébastien Bourdais	406

2016 VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, MARCH 13	ABC
St. Petersburg	
SATURDAY, APRIL 2	NBCSN
Phoenix	
SUNDAY, APRIL 17	NBCSN
Long Beach	
SUNDAY, APRIL 24	NBCSN
Barber Motorsports Park	
SUNDAY, MAY 14	ABC
Indianapolis	
SUNDAY, MAY 29	ABC
Indianapolis 500	
SATURDAY, JUNE 4	ABC
Belle Isle Park	
SUNDAY, JUNE 5	ABC
Belle Isle Park	
SATURDAY, JUNE 11	NBCSN
Texas	
SUNDAY, JUNE 26	NBCSN
Road America	
SUNDAY, JULY 10	NBCSN
Iowa	
SUNDAY, JULY 17	NBCSN
Toronto	
SUNDAY, JULY 31	NBCSN
Mid-Ohio	
SUNDAY, AUG. 21	NBCSN
Pocono	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 4	NBCSN
Boston	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 18	NBCSN
Sonoma	

For more IndyCar information, including preseason news and Verizon IndyCar Series race coverage during the season, go to autoweek.com/racing/indycar and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS

**HAAS F1 TEAM
SEEKING POINTS IN
ROOKIE FORMULA
ONE CAMPAIGN**

BY ADAM COOPER

FOR FORMULA One fans in America, the debut of the Haas F1 Team will be one of the most intriguing aspects of the 2016 season, and it's a neat coincidence that it comes 30 years after the demise of the last U.S.-owned team—Carl Haas' Beatrice F1 team—which also carried the Haas (no

relation) moniker.

In recent years, our expectations for what rookie teams can achieve have been colored by the troubled experiences of Manor, Caterham and HRT, all of which started in 2010 (initially under different names in the case of the first two). The ill-fated US F1 project, which collapsed before it got anywhere near a race circuit, was also supposed to start that year.

As for the aforementioned trio, each had big ambitions but struggled to really battle anyone except one another, and all three hit a financial

wall. By some miracle, Manor survived bankruptcy and has continued under new ownership, but its longer-term viability has to be questioned.

Haas is a very different proposition. Owner Gene Haas showed in NASCAR that he is a shrewd operator, and with team principal Gunther Steiner, he has put together a package that should see his team in a position to challenge for points from the outset.

The key is his strategy of engaging Ferrari as technical partner—an arrangement

that extends far beyond the power unit and gearbox deal that Sauber has enjoyed for so many years. Under recently relaxed FIA rules, teams can share mechanical components such as suspension and brake systems. What teams have to create in their own right is, in essence, the actual chassis and aerodynamics, so Haas has been able to put its entire R&D focus in that direction.

The waters have been muddied by Haas using the Maranello wind tunnel and several ex-Ferrari personnel. The FIA tightened up the



Clockwise from opposite: Haas F1 Team's Esteban Gutiérrez; team principal Guenther Steiner and owner Gene Haas; driver Romain Grosjean



rules on that practice in November, so the level of crossover is not perhaps what both parties first envisioned. However, there's every reason to expect that Haas will have a strong package, one that—in theory—won't be too far behind the works cars. Two big issues: first, that the team will take time to jell as an operational unit; and second, that it will always be relying on the works team to pass along development steps.

As for drivers, Haas showed he meant business by hiring Romain Grosjean, the man long regarded as the next potential superstar and arguably the best the team could have gotten, given the ongoing contracts of others. An upbeat

character, the former Lotus driver will be a good motivator. The team's other driver, Esteban Gutiérrez, brings Mexican funding after a year as Ferrari test driver. His career stalled at Sauber, but earlier on his way up he was highly regarded. He could surprise.

Times change quickly in F1, but it's worth remembering that Jordan finished fifth in the world championship in its first year in 1991, and Sauber achieved sixth place two years after that.

If Ferrari finds the sweet spot with the latest engine upgrades, and Haas hits the ground running with its overall package, such a result is not so far beyond the realm of possibility. 🌀



CAN ANYONE CATCH MERCEDES?

F1 TEAM'S SUPERIOR PACKAGE SHOULD LEAD THE FIELD ONCE AGAIN

■ THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT 2016 IS A BIG year for Formula One. Last year's domination by Mercedes, and more specifically by Lewis Hamilton, led to much frustration among fans. In an age of social media and short attention spans, people inevitably want more.

Of course, there have been many one-sided championships in the past—Mercedes was unbeatable in 1954-55 in what is now regarded as a glorious era—but in recent years, we've been spoiled by close battles and title fights regularly going down to the wire.

Mercedes is not to blame for creating a superior package, and it's a question of the others doing a better job. The big difference between now and past eras is the key role of the power unit and the perception among the public that it will be hard for the status quo to change, given the FIA's restrictions on development. In fact, those rules are not as tight as they were originally scheduled to be, so there is some room for other teams to catch up.

Ferrari built up some momentum in 2015; Renault has renewed its commitment and is investing; and Honda can only make progress. And how much room for progress does Mercedes itself still have?

Haas aside, there are no dramatic novelties in the entry list to stir up a little interest. Indeed, eight of the teams are heading into the season with unchanged line-ups. The good news is that power units will be louder, after adjustments to wastegate and exhaust arrangements. There has been some tinkering with the tire regulations—Pirelli has added a fifth “ultra soft” to its range, and teams now have more flexibility over what compounds they elect to use on a given race weekend.

Off-track discussions are continuing about the future direction of the sport. New aero rules for 2017 have already been adjusted from what was originally envisioned, but at least the key players accept that the sport has to move with the times and that cost cutting is imperative if teams are to survive.

—AC



For more F1 information throughout the season, go to autoweek.com/racing/formula-one and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA

2015 RECAP

■ MERCEDES CONTINUED ITS domination of the new hybrid V6 turbo era in 2015. But unlike the previous season, the battle between Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg did not go to the final round. Indeed, Hamilton looked set to scoop the title from the early races of the season, which inevitably led to criticism of the sport's failure to provide a good show. Rosberg found form in the last few races, and if he can continue that into 2016, life will be harder for Hamilton. Ferrari's renaissance with Sebastian Vettel on board was a positive, and the German's three wins at least provided some variety. McLaren's struggle with the new Honda power unit was the other big story of the season.



LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC (3); REDBULL CONTENT POOL



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ With Manor yet to declare its drivers at press time, the only rookie on the 2016 entry list was Renault's **Jolyon Palmer**. The 25-year-old Brit's career has been masterminded by father Jonathan, who started 84 Grands Prix between 1983 and 1989, and has since been active as a race series promoter, as the owner of Brands Hatch and as the first manager of Justin Wilson. Jolyon has clearly benefited hugely from his dad's support, but he's also gotten the job done on the track, winning the 2014 GP2 title and impressing the former Lotus team in testing. However, Renault, as a full works outfit, will be impatient for results.



OUR PICK

■ You'd have to be brave to bet against **Lewis Hamilton** and Mercedes winning the world championship for the third straight time. If there's a stronger challenge from rivals, it will be even harder for the team management to balance the interests of the two drivers. But Hamilton always seems to find that little bit extra, and something will have to go terribly wrong for him if Nico Rosberg is to win the championship.



ON THE RISE

■ **Max Verstappen** made a huge impact when he arrived on the F1 scene at age 17 last season and finished 12th in the drivers' championship. There's every reason to expect that the Dutchman will continue his mercurial progress. The fascinating aspect is that Toro Rosso will have Ferrari engines this year—although at 2015 specifications—and many observers believe that STR will be in a stronger position than Red Bull, with its TAG Heuer rebranded Renault units. Even last season, when the sister outfits had identical engines, the Italian team sometimes outpaced its senior partner.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- McLaren-Honda will make progress, and other F1 teams will think about using Honda engines in the future.
- Speculation on who will replace Kimi Räikkönen in 2017 will start early.
- The new race in Azerbaijan will be an unexpected highlight of the season.

2015 F1 FINAL STANDINGS

1.	Lewis Hamilton, Mercedes	381
2.	Nico Rosberg, Mercedes	322
3.	Sebastian Vettel, Ferrari	278
4.	Kimi Räikkönen, Ferrari	150
5.	Valtteri Bottas, Williams	136

2016 F1 SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, MARCH 20	NBCSN
Melbourne	
SUNDAY, APRIL 3	NBCSN
Bahrain	
SUNDAY, APRIL 17	NBCSN
China	
SUNDAY, MAY 1	NBCSN
Russia	
SUNDAY, MAY 15	NBCSN
Spain	
SUNDAY, MAY 29	NBC
Monaco	
SUNDAY, JUNE 12	NBC
Canada	
SUNDAY, JUNE 19	NBCSN
Azerbaijan	
SUNDAY, JULY 3	NBCSN
Austria	
SUNDAY, JULY 10	CNBC
United Kingdom	
SUNDAY, JULY 24	CNBC
Hungary	
SUNDAY, JULY 31	CNBC
Germany	
SUNDAY, AUG. 28	NBCSN
Belgium	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 4	NBCSN
Italy	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 18	NBCSN
Singapore	
SUNDAY, OCT. 2	NBCSN
Malaysia	
SUNDAY, OCT. 9	NBCSN
Japan	
SUNDAY, OCT. 23	NBC
Texas	
SUNDAY, OCT. 30	NBC
Mexico	
SUNDAY, NOV. 13	NBCSN
Brazil	
SUNDAY, NOV. 27	NBCSN
Abu Dhabi	

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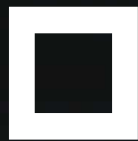


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HE'LL DO IT HIS WAY

AFTER A ROUGH START, TONY STEWART STILL HOPES TO 'CONTROL THE CIRCUS' OF HIS FINAL CUP SEASON

BY AL PEARCE



THE AVOWED GOAL for three-time NASCAR champion Tony Stewart was—in his own words—“to have fun” during this, his 18th and final Sprint Cup season. “I want to enjoy driving the car again,” he said five weeks before the annual Daytona 500 opener. “We’ve earned the right to do it our way. We can’t stop peo-

ple from doing what they want to do (to commemorate his career), but we can control what we do. We just want to control the circus and have fun.”

Sadly, it’s going to be awhile before NASCAR’s most complex driver has fun again. On Jan. 31, Stewart was injured in a dune buggy accident during a recreational ride in the desert outside Palm Springs. He sustained a burst fracture of the Lumbar-1 vertebra when his buggy landed awkwardly after cresting a dune.

He was hospitalized for three days before returning to Charlotte for back surgery Feb. 3. There’s no timetable for his return, but he’ll definitely miss the Daytona 500 and several more early-season races. A Stewart-Haas Racing spokesman says the owner-driver plans to eventually race his No. 14 Chevrolet this year.

Despite the setback, don’t expect “Smoke” to ease gently into retirement. Likely, he’ll be even more determined to race his ass off and enjoy himself one last time. He neither expects nor wants the same hype marking Jeff Gordon’s 2015 farewell ceremonies. “The stuff they did for Jeff was great,” Stewart said in the off-season. “I was proud to see what tracks and fans did. But A.) I don’t think I’m de-

“I still love the sport and what I’m doing, but I’m ready to regain my time back. I want to take things off my plate, and driving is where I can do that”

—Tony Stewart



ACTION SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

serving of that same treatment; and B.) that's just not me. I don't want people to go to all that effort again."

The 44-year-old racer says no single event spurred his decision to quit Cup after this season. Not the 2013 sprint-car accident in Iowa that almost took his right leg and cost him 15 Cup starts. Not the 2014 sprint-car accident in upstate New York that killed Kevin Ward Jr. Certainly not the 77-race slump he's on now dating to Pocono in mid-2013. After being in the top 10 in points 13 times his first 14 seasons, Stewart has lost whatever mojo that once made him a threat to win every weekend.

"It's the right time because I want

to do other things," he insisted in January. "I still love the sport and what I'm doing, but I'm ready to regain my time back. I want to take things off my plate, and driving is where I can do that. Next year ('17) won't be such a big change since I'll still be doing everything except driving. It'll be about 80 percent business as usual. I'll still be around the shop and at tracks, but I'll also be able to do other things. I want to run sprint-car races again. I want to watch an Indy 500, then fly to Charlotte for the 600. I want to attend the Formula One race in Monaco. There are other things I want to check off my bucket list."

But no rocking chairs or ponies. 🐾

DOWN WITH THE DOWNFORCE

CHANGES IN 2016 ARE DESIGNED TO GIVE CARS LESS GRIP, SHOWCASE DRIVERS' SKILLS

■ THE BIGGEST change in Sprint Cup this year is the lower-downforce rules package. Crew chiefs say the new rules mean less downforce, which drivers say means less control, less throttle time, less grip and slower cornering speeds.

That will supposedly lead to a better show among real racers and not just drivers. The package will be used everywhere except Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway—the restrictor-plate races.

There were times last year when NASCAR considered extending its 2015 aerodynamic specs through 2016. But drivers repeatedly asked for something better, something that would make them more important by making their cars harder to handle



and thus better showcase their skills. Officials listened to industry experts and the 10-driver advisory council before settling on the new rules package.

"This is what race-car driving is all about," Toyota driver Denny Hamlin said. "It's back in the hands of the crew chiefs and drivers to get their cars handling like they're supposed to. It shouldn't be an arms race of who builds the fastest cars in the shop."

Hamlin's teammate, Carl Edwards, agreed: "Solid. Keep doing it. Ship it," he said.

The new package features a 3.5-inch spoiler (down from 6 inches), a quarter-inch front splitter edge (down from 2 inch-

es), a 33-inch-wide radiator pan (down from 38 inches) and adjusted rear gear ratios that limit engines to 9,000 rpm. The summer races at Kentucky Speedway and Darlington Raceway got rave reviews when run using some elements of the new package.

Reps from Chevrolet, Ford and Toyota met with NASCAR last fall to offer their input. The driver council also met with officials and, according to Chevy driver Jamie McMurray, helped steer the process in a better direction. "For sure, this package will stay the same all season," McMurray said. "But they could take away still more downforce, and it would be even better." —AP

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2015 RECAP

■ TOYOTA DRIVER KYLE BUSCH WON THE MOST controversial of NASCAR's 65 Sprint Cup championships last year.

After suffering major foot and leg injuries in an Xfinity Series crash before the Daytona 500, the Joe Gibbs Racing star ran only 25 of the year's 36 races, far fewer than any champion had ever run. He won four of his 15 regular-season starts to easily advance into the 16-driver Chase for the Championship playoffs.

Once there, he ran off six top-10 finishes to earn one of four spots in the season-ending Championship Round in mid-November at Homestead-Miami Speedway. There, he beat fellow championship contenders Kevin Harvick, Jeff Gordon and Martin Truex Jr. in the Ford EcoBoost 400. It was Busch's first Cup (his older brother, Kurt, won it in 2004) and the fourth for JGR since 2000.

TEAMS/DRIVERS

CHEVROLET TEAMS

- **Chip Ganassi/Felix Sabates Racing:** Kyle Larson, Jamie McMurray
- **Germain Racing:** Casey Mears
- **HScott Racing:** Michael Annett, Clint Bowyer
- **Hendrick Motorsports:** Dale Earnhardt Jr., Chase Elliott, Jimmie Johnson, Kasey Kahne
- **JTG/Daugherty Racing:** A.J. Allmendinger
- **Leavine Family Racing:** Michael McDowell
- **Richard Childress Racing:** Austin Dillon, Paul Menard, Ryan Newman
- **Stewart-Haas Racing:** Kurt Busch, Kevin Harvick, Danica Patrick, Tony Stewart
- **Tommy Baldwin Racing:** Alex Bowman

TOYOTA TEAMS

- **BK Racing Toyota:** David Ragan
- **Furniture Row Racing:** Martin Truex Jr.
- **Joe Gibbs Racing:** Kyle Busch, Carl Edwards, Denny Hamlin, Matt Kenseth

FORD TEAMS

- **Front Row Motorsports:** Chris Buescher, Landon Cassill
- **Richard Petty Motorsports:** Aric Almirola, Brian Scott
- **Roush Fenway Racing:** Trevor Bayne, Greg Biffle, Ricky Stenhouse Jr.
- **Team Penske:** Brad Keselowski, Joey Logano
- **Wood Brothers Racing:** Ryan Blaney



NEWCOMERS TO WATCH

■ NASCAR has a strong class of Sprint Cup rookies and newcomers this year. Xfinity Series veterans **Brian Scott** (Richard Petty Motor-sports, pictured above) and **Ryan Blaney** (Wood Brothers Racing) join former Xfinity champions **Chase Elliott** (Hendrick Motor-sports, pictured top) and **Chris Buescher** (Front Row Motorsports) for the full schedule. Most Cup-watchers expect Elliott to be Rookie of the Year, although Blaney will be a factor.



ON THE RISE

■ **Ryan Blaney**, 22, has just 18 Sprint Cup starts, but his overall NASCAR résumé suggests a productive future for the Ohio native and son of former NASCAR driver Dave Blaney. He has four victories and 33 top-10s in 43 Xfinity Series starts and four victories and 40 top-10s in 58 Camping World Truck Series starts. He'll run the full Sprint Cup schedule in the No. 21 Ford Fusion for Wood Brothers Racing through an alliance with Team Penske. In limited Sprint Cup action last season, Blaney had two top-10 finishes.



OUR PICK

■ We've nailed every Sprint Cup championship pick since 2005, correctly naming one-timers **Brad Keselowski**, **Kevin Harvick** (pictured) and **Kyle Busch**, two-time champion **Tony Stewart** and six-time Cup winner **Jimmie Johnson**. The fact that we haven't always matched the right name with the correct year should be of no consequence. So please just ignore the little man behind the curtain ...

This year we'll be dead right, again: Harvick, after a lost 2015, will hoist the Cup for Stewart-Haas Racing.

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2016 RACING PREVIEW

NASCAR SPRINT CUP



2016 CHASE FIELD

■ HERE ARE AUTOWEEK'S CHOICES FOR THE 2016 NASCAR Sprint Cup Chase that begins Sept. 18 at Chicagoland Speedway. Reminder, race fans: The top 16 drivers make the Chase, with four competitors being eliminated every three races until just four are left with a shot at the title for the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway. The top finisher out of the "Fast Four" drivers at Homestead will be crowned the next Sprint Cup champion.

Greg Biffle	Chase Elliott	Kyle Larson
Kurt Busch	Denny Hamlin	Joey Logano
Kyle Busch	Jimmie Johnson	Ryan Newman
Austin Dillon	Kasey Kahne	Martin Truex
Dale Earnhardt Jr.	Brad Keselowski	
Carl Edwards	Matt Kenseth	

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Chase Elliott will win at least one race and be named Rookie of the Year, one of the few honors his famous father didn't earn.
- Despite another so-so season, Dale Earnhardt Jr. will win his 14th consecutive Most Popular Driver Award en route to eventually bettering Bill Elliott's record of 16.
- At some point during the season, drivers and crew chiefs will complain bitterly about the rules package ... the one they helped develop.

2015 NASCAR SPRINT CUP SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

1.	Kyle Busch	5,043
2.	Kevin Harvick	5,042
3.	Jeff Gordon	5,038
4.	Martin Truex Jr.	5,032
5.	Carl Edwards	2,368
6.	Joey Logano	2,360
7.	Brad Keselowski	2,347
8.	Kurt Busch	2,333
9.	Denny Hamlin	2,327
10.	Jimmie Johnson	2,315

2016 NASCAR SPRINT CUP SERIES SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEB. 21	FOX	SUNDAY, JULY 17	NBCSN
Daytona		New Hampshire	
SUNDAY, FEB. 28	FOX	SUNDAY, JULY 24	NBCSN
Atlanta		Indianapolis	
SUNDAY, MARCH 6	FOX	SUNDAY, JULY 31	NBCSN
Las Vegas		Pocono	
SUNDAY, MARCH 13	FOX	SUNDAY, AUG. 7	USA
Phoenix		Watkins Glen	
SUNDAY, MARCH 20	FOX	SATURDAY, AUG. 20	NBCSN
Fontana		Bristol	
SUNDAY, APRIL 3	FS1*	SUNDAY, AUG. 28	NBCSN
Martinsville		Michigan	
SATURDAY, APRIL 9	FOX	SUNDAY, SEPT. 4	NBC
Texas		Darlington	
SUNDAY, APRIL 17	FOX	SATURDAY, SEPT. 10	NBCSN
Bristol		Richmond	
SUNDAY, APRIL 24	FOX	SUNDAY, SEPT. 18	NBCSN
Richmond		Chicagoland	
SUNDAY, MAY 1	FOX	SUNDAY, SEPT. 25	NBCSN
Talladega		New Hampshire	
SATURDAY, MAY 7	FS1	SUNDAY, OCT. 2	NBCSN
Kansas		Dover	
SUNDAY, MAY 15	FS1	SATURDAY, OCT. 8	NBC
Dover		Charlotte	
SATURDAY, MAY 21	FS1	SUNDAY, OCT. 16	NBC
Sprint All Star Race		Kansas	
SUNDAY, MAY 29	FOX	SUNDAY, OCT. 23	NBCSN
Charlotte		Talladega	
SUNDAY, JUNE 5	FS1	SUNDAY, OCT. 30	NBCSN
Pocono		Martinsville	
SUNDAY, JUNE 12	FS1	SUNDAY, NOV. 6	NBC
Michigan		Texas	
SUNDAY, JUNE 26	FS1	SUNDAY, NOV. 13	NBC
Sonoma		Phoenix	
SATURDAY, JULY 2	NBC	SUNDAY, NOV. 20	NBC
Daytona		Homestead-Miami	
SATURDAY, JULY 9	NBCSN		
Kentucky			

*FS1 = Fox Sports 1



For more on the Sprint Cup Series, follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA and go to autoweek.com/racing/nascar

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WHOLE NEW BALLGAME

XFINITY ADOPTS NASCAR SPRINT CUP'S CHASE FORMAT

BY MATT WEAVER

IT'S A NEW game for the NASCAR Xfinity Series in 2016 as the series will put into play a Chase elimination format similar to the Sprint Cup Series to determine its season champion.

That means fans and participants should expect the same drama, excitement and intensity on Saturdays as they get on Sundays. It also makes the championship a bit of a crapshoot, as any driver could potentially take the crown—so long as they catch fire during the final seven events.

The format has been well received in the garage as it creates additional parity and a platform to sell sponsorships for the second half of the season. Like the Cup Series, any full-time driver who wins a regular season event will gain entry into the playoff

field—Xfinity's is 12 deep instead of 16. The same goes for any driver who wins two of the four Dash 4 Cash events.

The rest of the field will comprise the drivers with the highest number of points.

In short, the rules of engagement have changed across the entire NASCAR landscape, and Ty Dillon has been among the most vocal praising the new “all or nothing” approach to racing.

“I think it takes away from the conservative side of the sport, and it's been good in the Sprint Cup Series,” Dillon said. “It just provides more opportunities for a young driver in the Xfinity Series to win a championship and win races.”

But more than anything else, NASCAR hopes the format will add interest to the tour late in the season when football starts to take its hold on

America. More often than not, the championship is all but decided by October; the sanctioning body hopes this will inject some much-needed storylines into the tour on a weekly basis.

Driver Brendan Gaughan expects history to repeat itself, praising the Chase for keeping Cup mainstream.

“I was ecstatic about the Chase when it was first announced in 2004, the original, and I think NASCAR has hit a home run with this elimination style,” Gaughan said. “It's exciting and it brings people back to racing when they might want to watch football instead.

“It's going to make us race harder for the Dash 4 Cash and not be so conservative.”

And if that happens, NASCAR might have called its shot and hit a home run in the Xfinity Series, as well. 🍀

TEAMS/DRIVERS

XFINITY SERIES LINEUP

- **Derrike Cope Racing:**
Derrike Cope
- **JD Motorsports:** Ross Chastain
- **Jeremy Clements Racing:**
Jeremy Clements
- **Jimmy Means Racing:** Joey Gase
- **JR Motorsports:** Elliott Sadler,
Justin Allgaier
- **Kaulig Racing:** Blake Koch
- **Richard Childress Racing:**
Ty Dillon, Brandon Jones,
Brendan Gaughan
- **SS-Green Light Racing:**
Ray Black Jr.
- **Roush Fenway Racing:**
Bubba Wallace, Ryan Reed
- **Team Penske:** TBD
- **Joe Gibbs Racing:** TBD,
Daniel Suárez, Erik Jones
- **TriStar Motorsports:** David Starr
- **MBM Motorsports:**
Mark Thompson
- **Athenian Motorsports:**
John Wes Townley



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ **Erik Jones** virtually wins this category by default, leading a weak rookie class that also includes Brandon Jones and Ray Black Jr.

The defending Truck Series champion is destined for a Sprint Cup ride at Joe Gibbs Racing, and a full season or two in the Xfinity Series is merely another checklist item before he graduates.

Paired with veteran racer-turned-crew chief Chris Gabehart, Jones should be the favorite to win the championship, assuming he doesn't stumble over the new elimination playoff format.



For more NASCAR Xfinity series information throughout the season, go to autoweek.com/racing/nascar-xfinity and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA



\\ 2015 RECAP

■ **CHRIS BUESCHER** REMAINED A PILLAR OF CONSISTENCY LAST SEASON AND controlled the championship battle from nearly start to finish.

His victory at Iowa in May recaptured his lost championship lead, and he never looked back. He won again at Dover and posted 20 top-10s in 33 starts to cruise to his first NASCAR championship and punch his ticket for a Sprint Cup Series ride with Front Row Motorsports in 2016.

In many ways, Buescher can be credited for the Chase for the Championship coming to the Xfinity Series as his big first half took much of the drama out of the season's stretch run. He led the championship by 18 points going into the finale and won the title by 15 over Chase Elliott.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Sprint Cup drivers will win every race in the Chase.
- Alex Bowman will win at least one of his expected nine starts for JR Motorsports.
- Only six races will be won by non-Cup drivers.

2015 NASCAR XFINITY SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

1.	Chris Buescher	1,190
2.	Chase Elliott	1,175
3.	Ty Dillon	1,172
4.	Regan Smith	1,168
5.	Daniel Suárez	1,078
6.	Elliott Sadler	1,075
7.	Bubba Wallace	1,071
8.	Brian Scott	1,032
9.	Brendan Gaughan	1,012
10.	Ryan Reed	902



OUR PICK

■ **Justin Allgaier** returns to the Xfinity Series as a man on a mission after a three-year stint in Sprint Cup.

The former ARCA champion is one of the most underrated drivers in the garage and will finally be able to prove it with JR Motorsports. Crew chief Jason Burdett proved his worth last season with Regan Smith, and he's seemingly a good personality fit for Allgaier, too.

Ultimately, the Chase for the Championship is a crapshoot, but Allgaier has the equipment and the mental muscle needed to survive to Homestead.



ON THE RISE

■ **Daniel Suárez** posted six top-10 finishes in the final seven Xfinity events last season and looked close to collecting his first victory. Coincidentally, those final seven races are now the Chase for the Championship, and that sets up very well for the Mexican top prospect.

Initially, there were questions about whether Suárez could make the jump from short-track racing to national touring, but he's successfully met every challenge and is ready to contend for his first championship.

2016 NASCAR XFINITY SERIES SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, FEB. 20	FS1
Daytona	
SATURDAY, FEB. 27	FS1
Atlanta	
SATURDAY, MARCH 5	FS1
Las Vegas	
SATURDAY, MARCH 12	FOX
Phoenix	
SATURDAY, MARCH 19	FS1
Fontana	
FRIDAY, APRIL 8	FS1
Texas	
SATURDAY, APRIL 16	FS1
Bristol	
SATURDAY, APRIL 23	FS1
Richmond	
SATURDAY, APRIL 30	FOX
Talladega	
SATURDAY, MAY 14	FOX
Dover	
SATURDAY, MAY 28	FS1
Charlotte	
SATURDAY, JUNE 4	FOX
Pocono	
SATURDAY, JUNE 11	FS1
Michigan	
SUNDAY, JUNE 19	FS1
Iowa	
FRIDAY, JULY 1	NBCSN
Daytona	
FRIDAY, JULY 8	NBCSN
Kentucky	

SATURDAY, JULY 16	NBCSN
New Hampshire	
SATURDAY, JULY 23	NBCSN
Indianapolis	
SATURDAY, JULY 30	NBCSN
Iowa	
SATURDAY, AUG. 6	CNBC
Watkins Glen	
SATURDAY, AUG. 13	USA
Mid-Ohio	
FRIDAY, AUG. 19	USA
Bristol	
SATURDAY, AUG. 27	NBCSN
Road America	
SATURDAY, SEPT. 3	NBC
Darlington	
FRIDAY, SEPT. 9	NBCSN
Richmond	
SATURDAY, SEPT. 17	NBC
Chicagoland	
SATURDAY, SEPT. 24	NBCSN
Kentucky	
SATURDAY, OCT. 1	NBCSN
Dover	
FRIDAY, OCT. 7	NBCSN
Charlotte	
SATURDAY, OCT. 15	NBCSN
Kansas	
SATURDAY, NOV. 5	NBC
Texas	
SATURDAY, NOV. 12	NBC
Phoenix	
SATURDAY, NOV. 19	NBCSN
Homestead-Miami	

CHASING A CHAMPIONSHIP

RICO ABREU SETS LOFTY GOALS FOR ROOKIE SEASON

BY MATT WEAVER

□ SIMPLY PUT, RICO ABREU IS a game changer.

With countless Midget and sprint-car victories behind him, Abreu is ready to compete full time in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series for ThorSport Racing. Despite his top-flight rookie status, Abreu has set much loftier goals than just Rookie of the Year: He wants to win the championship.

Abreu doesn't expect immediate success, but he does believe the rash of offseason rule changes will eventually play into his favor. He's most excited about the introduction of

the Chase for the Championship, as it gives him ample time to adjust to heavier cars and larger tracks before the final seven races that make up the knockout playoff format.

This Chase will conclude at Homestead-Miami Speedway with four contenders racing to be named Truck Series champion.

"I'm pumped," Abreu said. "Obviously, I've never raced in a series that has a format like this, but it's going to be new for everyone else, too. I really feel like that gives a guy like me a shot to race for a championship."

Abreu brings with him a passionate fan base and the potential to reconnect NASCAR to its lost grassroots audience. Should he have any success this season, it will be a significant victory for the entire industry. 🏆



2015 RECAP

■ ERIK JONES WOULD NOT be denied in his quest to win the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series championship. Disappointing results at Kansas, Charlotte and Texas dropped him to fourth in the standings. Jones regrouped in the second half, finishing the season with a 15-race top-10 streak. That allowed him to become the youngest champion in the 20-year history of the tour.

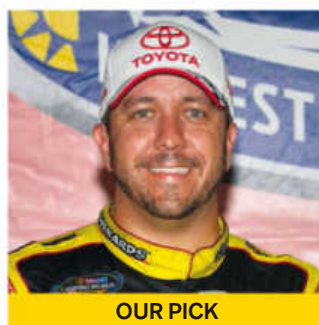


Rico Abreu at Homestead



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ A rookie at age 31, **Grant Enfinger** brings technical experience and driving talent comparable to the most tenured veterans.



OUR PICK

■ There's nothing flashy about **Matt Crafton**. He's won when it mattered the most and will win his third title in four years.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Daniel Hemric leads the series in wins but loses the championship in the Chase.
- Rico Abreu struggles early but makes the Chase and contends for the championship.
- The new caution clock rule rarely gets used as cautions occur naturally or due to debris.

2015 NASCAR CAMPING WORLD TRUCK SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

- | | |
|-------------------|-----|
| 1. Erik Jones | 899 |
| 2. Tyler Reddick | 884 |
| 3. Matt Crafton | 877 |
| 4. Johnny Sauter | 809 |
| 5. Timothy Peters | 804 |

2016 NASCAR CAMPING WORLD TRUCK SERIES SCHEDULE

- | | |
|-------------------|-----|
| FRIDAY, FEB. 19 | FS1 |
| Daytona | |
| SATURDAY, FEB. 27 | FS1 |
| Atlanta | |
| SATURDAY, APRIL 2 | FS1 |
| Martinsville | |
| FRIDAY, MAY 6 | FS1 |
| Kansas | |
| FRIDAY, MAY 13 | FS1 |
| Dover | |

- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| FRIDAY, MAY 20 | FS1 |
| Charlotte | |
| FRIDAY, JUNE 10 | FS1 |
| Texas | |
| SATURDAY, JUNE 18 | FS1 |
| Iowa | |
| SATURDAY, JUNE 25 | FS1 |
| Gateway | |
| THURSDAY, JULY 7 | FS1 |
| Kentucky | |
| WEDNESDAY, JULY 20 | FS1 |
| Eldora | |
| SATURDAY, JULY 30 | FS1 |
| Pocono | |
| WEDNESDAY, AUG. 17 | FS1 |
| Bristol | |
| SATURDAY, AUG. 27 | FS1 |
| Michigan | |
| SUNDAY, SEPT. 4 | FS1 |
| Bowmanville | |
| FRIDAY, SEPT. 16 | FS1 |
| Chicagoland | |
| SATURDAY, SEPT. 24 | FS1 |
| New Hampshire | |
| SATURDAY, OCT. 1 | FS1 |
| Las Vegas | |
| SATURDAY, OCT. 22 | FOX |
| Talladega | |
| SATURDAY, OCT. 29 | FS1 |
| Martinsville | |
| FRIDAY, NOV. 4 | FS1 |
| Texas | |
| FRIDAY, NOV. 11 | FS1 |
| Phoenix | |
| FRIDAY, NOV. 18 | FS1 |
| Homestead-Miami | |

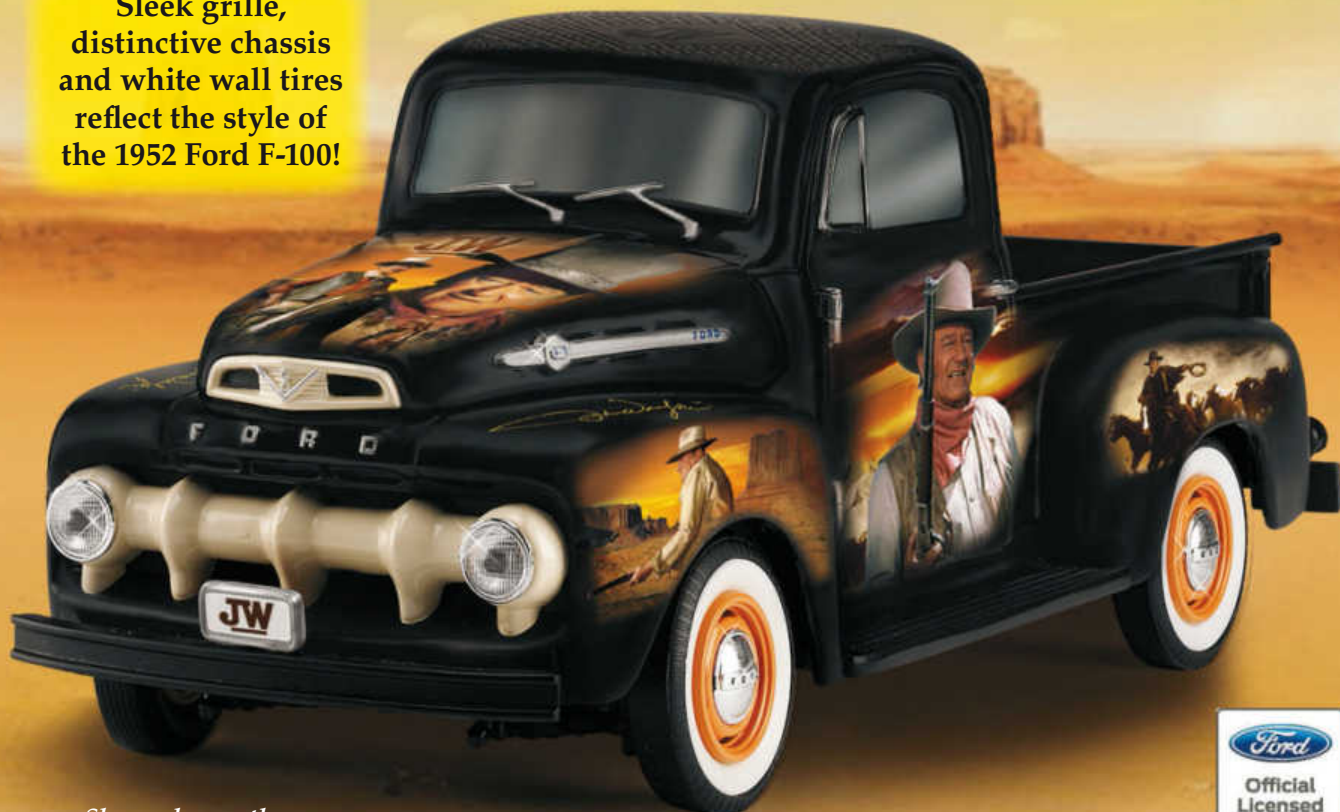
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SOME GOOD NEWS FOR VW

VOLKSWAGEN IS STILL THE TEAM TO BEAT IN WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP



BY ANTHONY PEACOCK

 IF ONLY EVERYTHING IN LIFE was as reliable as a Volkswagen. The German giant's famous advertising slogan of the 1980s still rings relevant more than 30 years later, providing at least one bit of good news for it in the World Rally Championship after what has been a tumultuous time for the manufacturer, thanks to the 2015 emissions scandal.

The headline fact of the 2015 World

Rally Championship is that only one other manufacturer managed to win a WRC rally—and even then, only once. The result was German dominance even more comprehensive than that seen in Formula One.


The stats paint the picture of a VW steamroller that crushed the opposition in 2015: 12 wins, 26 podium finishes and 159 fastest stage times out of a possible 231. Each of the driver and co-driver pairings—led by three-time world champion Sébastien Ogier—won a rally and clinched a podium place at least seven times.

Go further back in history, and the statistics become even more emphatic: Since making its World Rally Championship debut in 2013, the Polo R WRC has now claimed 35 out of 40 possible wins (that's more than 87 percent) and has completed the longest winning streak of consecutive rally victories for one manufacturer (12).

When they were teammates at Citroën until 2011, Ogier and Sébastien Loeb didn't always see eye to eye. But five years ago, Loeb actually did Ogier a massive favor by turning down Volkswagen's approaches for 2012, leaving the way clear for the younger Frenchman to join the team that would go on to make history.

"At the time, I didn't dare to think that we could achieve as much as we did," said Ogier. "But I appreciated very much Volkswagen's way of working, and now we see the results. Anyone who thinks that this happened easily is wrong, though. We've all worked very hard to get where we are."

The 2015 version of the Polo R WRC introduced a hydraulically operated paddle-shift gearbox, with the team's engineers estimating that three-quarters of all mechanical components on the car were either new or revised.

But there's now another major change on the horizon for Volkswagen, as the architect of all this success—team director Jost Capito—has recently accepted a new job at McLaren. His successor will have a huge track record to live up to, amid the uncertainty of major rule changes for 2017. And that might just give Volkswagen's rivals a chance to finally catch up. 

CITROËN LOOKS TO CLOSE GAP ON VOLKSWAGEN

■ THE DESTINY OF THE 2015 champion's title was never in doubt, but a huge battle raged behind Volkswagen for the runner-up spot.

The protagonists were Citroën, Hyundai and Ford. Hyundai showed its intent with a strong run of results at the start of the season. But as the year



went on, lead driver Thierry Neuville struggled to the point where the team was openly criticizing him. The Belgian retaliated by claiming that the i20 WRC wasn't competitive.

As a result, the No. 2 slot in the manufacturers' championship went to Citroën, which stole the headlines at the start of 2015 by announcing Sébastien Loeb's comeback for Monte

Carlo. After two years off, the Frenchman won his first stage by 30 seconds.

Citroën's Kris Meeke was often the only driver to take the fight to the Volkswagens last season—resulting in a Rally Argentina win—but there were also a number of mistakes.

Nonetheless, the consistency of teammate Mads Østberg helped to ensure that Citroën beat Hyundai by just six points. Volkswagen, meanwhile, was 183 points ahead.

—AP



\\ 2015 RECAP

■ **SÉBASTIEN OGIER** STAMPED HIS AUTHORITY ON THE 2015 SEASON BY WINNING eight of the 13 rallies, starting with the opening round of the season—Monte Carlo—and clinching the drivers' title by Australia in September.

It wasn't quite a perfect season for the Frenchman: He stunned onlookers by crashing on the final stage of the Rally of Spain and handing victory to his young teammate, Andreas Mikkelsen. Kris Meeke and Mikkelsen were the only two debut winners of the season. The most spectacular crash of 2015 came courtesy of Ott Tänak, who drove his M-Sport Fiesta into a lake in Mexico—earning him the nickname “TiTanak.”



ON THE RISE

■ Frenchman **Eric Camilli** has just been handed the keys to an M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC—one of the top four cars out there—despite having only competed in 10 WRC events before the start of the 2016 season. At age 28, he's not your typical series newcomer, either. So what convinced team principal Malcolm Wilson to sign him? “I think he's a future world champion,” explained Wilson. “I can't honestly remember the last time that I felt this excited about having a new driver in our car.”



OUR PICK

■ Without sounding like a broken record, it's hard to look beyond **Sébastien Ogier**, who aims for his fourth straight title. The 32-year-old former ski instructor and successor to nine-time champ Sébastien Loeb is at his absolute peak, and there is no consistent opposition to the Volkswagen Polo R WRC, which has undergone some further evolutions for 2016.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Hayden Paddon, signed up for his first full season with Hyundai in 2016, will out-finish his experienced teammates.
- Despite separating from Citroën to concentrate on Rally Raids with Peugeot, rally legend Sébastien Loeb will reappear in the WRC in some shape or form: possibly in the new Toyota.
- WRC TV and promotion will take a big step forward during 2016 thanks to increased involvement from Red Bull: a major shareholder in the commercial rights to the sport.

2016 WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULE

JAN. 22-24	Monte Carlo
FEB. 12-14	Sweden
MARCH 4-6	Mexico
APRIL 22-24	Argentina
MAY 20-22	Portugal
JUNE 10-12	Italy
JULY 1-3	Poland
JULY 29-31	Finland
AUG. 19-21	Germany
SEPT. 9-11	China
SEPT. 30-OCT. 2	France
OCT. 14-16	Spain
OCT. 28-30	Great Britain
NOV. 18-20	Australia



For more FIA World Rally Championship information throughout the season, including race results, series news and stats, go to autoweek.com/racing/rally and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA



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STAYING HUNGRY

2-TIME CHAMP ANTRON BROWN RELISHES BEING NO. 1 IN TOUGH TOP FUEL CLASS

BY SUSAN WADE

 ALBERT BROWN earned a living with his New Jersey septic-tank service. Weekends, he raced his Chevrolet Vega at English-town in the NHRA's Super Gas class. Tagging along, taking in the sights, sounds and the passion, was Albert's son, Antron.

Young Antron Brown alternated between pretending he was a racing star and actually meeting his heroes.

Eventually, Brown said, he learned that "I don't want to be No. 1 in the 'No. 2' business."

It turns out he's No. 1 in drag-racing's top class. But when it comes to titles earned, "No. 2" last November overjoyed him. It didn't change him, though.

He focuses on being a hus-

band, father of three, the only drag racer to run in both the Pro Stock Motorcycle and Top Fuel classes, and a role model. Now he's the one signing autographs for the next generation.

"What makes it so special is I remember growing up seeing 'Big Daddy' Don Garlits and Dave Schultz and all of them. You could go up and shake their hands and talk to them, and it made it like I was a part of things," he said. "That's what helped me along the way, that same passion they had."

His faith has played an enormous role, too. "This is my calling, to do what I do, to be out here among all the fans and let them know what I'm really all about," Brown said.


It's well known Brown is the first black Top Fuel champion.

However, Brown said he's happy "if I can be an inspiration for others—not just African-Americans, just Americans, period—give them somebody they can look up to who's positive, who never settled for things in life."

Brown said the NHRA is inclusive because "everybody can relate. We're able to do it on our own budget and have fun. All my heroes did their craft in their backyard and came out here and did it on a professional level."

With an evangelical flair, the youthful Brown, 39, said, "I'm an old, beat-up kid from Chesterfield, New Jersey. I used to pump out sewers for a living. And now I smell the sweet smell of nitro. It gets no better than that."

It just might—with a third title in 2016. 🍀

 For more NHRA information, go to autoweek.com/racing/NHRA and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA



2015 RECAP

■ THE FUNNY CAR CLASS maintained championship suspense until the closing hours of the 2015 season. Del Worsham beat chief challenger Jack Beckman in a head-to-head semifinal duel at the Pomona, California, finale to clinch.

Four victories in six Countdown races made the difference for Worsham. The 2011 Top Fuel king became the third (Kenny Bernstein and Gary Scelzi) driver to earn both nitro class crowns.

Top Fuel's Antron Brown and Pro Stock's Erica Enders iced their second titles with one race remaining.

Brown earned seven victories in 10 finals, set the national elapsed-time record and won the first three Countdown events.

Enders scored back-to-back titles, winning nine times in 11 finals. Rival Allen Johnson said, "She's making us all look silly."



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ Following one of his three top-qualifying performances, Pro Stock's **Drew Skillman** said, "I still make a bunch of mistakes." They weren't noticeable from the 2015 NHRA Rookie of the Year. He can go toe to toe with far more experienced contenders. No one will be shocked when he KOs some heavyweights.



TOP FUEL
■ Two-time champ **Antron Brown** is just cranking up, and **Shawn Langdon** will shine with full resources again. But **Tony Schumacher** (above) will capture his ninth crown.



FUNNY CAR
■ To borrow country singer Toby Keith's lyrics, **John Force**, 66, may not be good as he once was, but he's as good once as he ever was to seize his 17th title.



PRO STOCK
■ **Shane Gray** and **Allen Johnson** could be the first to solve the EFI challenges, but the savvy **Jeg Coughlin** (above) ultimately will out-finesse gritty Greg Anderson.



NHRA MEDIA (8)



ON THE RISE

TOP FUEL

■ **Leah Pritchett**, a Nostalgia Funny Car champion and Pro Modified winner, listens to instruction. That and three limited seasons prepped her for duty. Headliner Tony Schumacher called her “badass.”

FUNNY CAR

■ “Watch out for the quiet ones” applies to **Tommy Johnson Jr.** The veteran nitro driver is overdue, and he has smart John Collins as crew chief to make it happen.

PRO STOCK

■ Would you give a Countdown salesman? In **Bo Butner's** case, it's a sound move. Cracking the top 10 requires a massive effort, but the 2006 Comp champ could pull it off.

OUR PICKS (COUNTDOWN QUALIFIERS)

TOP FUEL

1. Antron Brown
2. Richie Crampton
3. Brittany Force
4. Doug Kalitta
5. Shawn Langdon
6. Clay Millican
7. Leah Pritchett
8. Tony Schumacher
9. JR Todd
10. Steve Torrence

FUNNY CAR

1. Jack Beckman
2. Ron Capps
3. Matt Hagan
4. Courtney Force
5. John Force
6. Robert Hight
7. Tommy Johnson Jr.
8. Cruz Pedregon
9. Tim Wilkerson
10. Del Worsham

PRO STOCK

1. Greg Anderson
2. Jeg Coughlin
3. Erica Enders
4. Shane Gray
5. Allen Johnson
6. Jason Line
7. Chris McGaha
8. Larry Morgan
9. Vincent Nobile
10. Drew Skillman

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

■ Top-tier Funny Car crew chief Jimmy Prock will move from Jack Beckman's team to Ron Capps', marking the second time those two Don Schumacher Racing operations have swapped personnel.

■ Six-time IHRA Top Fuel champion Clay Millican will win his first NHRA race. Ditto for Brittany Force.

■ Grinder Terry McMillen will reach his first NHRA Top Fuel final.

2016 NHRA SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEB. 14	FS1 (L)
Pomona	
SUNDAY, FEB. 28	FS1 (L)
Phoenix	
SUNDAY, MARCH 20	FS1 (L)
Gainesville	
SUNDAY, APRIL 3	FS1 (L)
Las Vegas	
SUNDAY, APRIL 24	FS1
Charlotte	
SUNDAY, MAY 1	FS1 (L)
Houston	
SUNDAY, MAY 15	FS1
Atlanta	
SUNDAY, MAY 22	FS1 (L)
Topeka	
SUNDAY, JUNE 5	FS1
Epping	
SUNDAY, JUNE 12	FS1
Englishtown	
SUNDAY, JUNE 19	FS1
Bristol	
SUNDAY, JUNE 26	FS1
Norwalk	
SUNDAY, JULY 10	FS1 (L)
Chicago	
SUNDAY, JULY 24	FOX (L)
Denver	
SUNDAY, JULY 31	FOX (L)
Sonoma	
SUNDAY, AUG. 7	FOX (L)
Seattle	
SUNDAY, AUG. 21	FS1 (L)
Brainerd	
MONDAY, SEPT. 5	FOX, FS1
Indianapolis	
SUNDAY, SEPT. 18	FS1 (L)
Charlotte	
TUESDAY, SEPT. 27	FS1 (L)
St. Louis	
SUNDAY, OCT. 2	FS1 (L)
Reading	
SUNDAY, OCT. 16	FS1 (L)
Dallas	
SUNDAY, OCT. 30	FS1 (L)
Las Vegas	
SUNDAY, NOV. 13	FS1 (L)
Pomona	

2015 NHRA DRAG RACING SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

TOP FUEL

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-------|
| 1. | Antron Brown | 2,692 |
| 2. | Tony Schumacher | 2,461 |
| 3. | Richie Crampton | 2,430 |
| 4. | Larry Dixon | 2,412 |
| 5. | Doug Kalitta | 2,388 |
| 6. | Shawn Langdon | 2,387 |
| 7. | Brittany Force | 2,363 |
| 8. | Steve Torrence | 2,342 |
| 9. | JR Todd | 2,307 |
| 10. | Dave Connolly | 2,303 |

FUNNY CAR

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|-------|
| 1. | Del Worsham | 2,664 |
| 2. | Jack Beckman | 2,608 |
| 3. | Tommy Johnson | 2,548 |
| 4. | Ron Capps | 2,490 |
| 5. | Matt Hagan | 2,418 |
| 6. | Robert Hight | 2,370 |
| 7. | John Force | 2,332 |
| 8. | Alexis DeJoria | 2,313 |
| 9. | Cruz Pedregon | 2,286 |
| 10. | Tim Wilkerson | 2,259 |

PRO STOCK


- | | | |
|-----|----------------|-------|
| 1. | Erica Enders | 2,712 |
| 2. | Greg Anderson | 2,492 |
| 3. | Allen Johnson | 2,443 |
| 4. | Chris McGaha | 2,442 |
| 5. | Drew Skillman | 2,433 |
| 6. | Vincent Nobile | 2,389 |
| 7. | Larry Morgan | 2,376 |
| 8. | Jason Line | 2,331 |
| 9. | Shane Gray | 2,299 |
| 10. | Jonathan Gray | 2,286 |

NO 'RUN-OF-THE-MILL' APPROACH

WEATHERTECH BRINGS MARKETING HORSEPOWER TO IMSA SPORTSCAR SERIES



BY STEVEN COLE SMITH

 FOR ITS FIRST TWO YEARS AS the merged entity of the Grand-Am and American Le Mans Series, the Tudor United SportsCar Championship reflected the personality of its elegant, low-key watchmaker sponsor. Most everyone in the series knew that was going to change when, midway through the 2015 season,

a new title sponsor was named at a press conference the same weekend as the race at Road America in Wisconsin.

The difference? David MacNeil, founder and CEO of WeatherTech, the Chicago-area manufacturer of automotive floor mats and other accessories, appeared on the podium with some provocatively dressed models and a promise to shake things up a bit. To those who had em-

braced the fine Tudor watch sensibilities, it was clear there was a new, and slightly raucous, sponsorship sheriff in town.

MacNeil's company reflects his big, bold personality. It relentlessly markets itself as a quality, American-made alternative to imported products and is doing well enough that WeatherTech again advertised on the Super Bowl broadcast this year. And the WeatherTech sponsorship offers something Tudor never could—hands-on monitoring of the activation from up close.

How close? MacNeil's son Cooper has been a winning driver since the series began, co-piloting the Alex Job Racing WeatherTech No. 22 Porsche 911 GT3 R car. And on the drivers' list for the 2016 Rolex 24 at Daytona for the 22 car: David MacNeil himself, co-driving with Cooper MacNeil, Leh Keen, Gunnar Jeannette and Shane van Gisbergen. You can't get a closer perspective on your sponsorship dollars than from the cockpit.

2015 RECAP PROTOTYPE

■ The Action Express team of Christian Fittipaldi and João Barbosa won its second straight championship in the Corvette DP with a come-from-behind performance in the last race.

PROTOTYPE CHALLENGE

■ Consistency made the difference for the CORE Autosport twosome of Colin Braun and Jon Bennett.

GT LE MANS

■ Patrick Pilet had more than one co-driver in his Porsche North America 911, but combined, the results gave Pilet and the team the championship.

GT DAYTONA

■ Townsend Bell and Bill Sweedler won the championship for the Scuderia Corsa Ferrari team, but for 2016, the pair moves to Lamborghini.



NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ **Kenton Koch**, a graduate of the Mazda ladder system, at one time had a 20-lap lead on second place in the Prototype Challenge class at the Rolex 24 at Daytona and went on to help take the JDC/Miller Oreca-Chevrolet team to victory. And he made for an emotional victory-lane interview, as he was accompanied by his mother, who had recently undergone a heart transplant. Smart, funny and a great driver, keep an eye on Koch.



OUR PICKS

PROTOTYPE

■ The No. 90 Visit Florida **Chevrolet Corvette DP team** went into the 2015 season finale at Petit Le Mans with the points lead, dominated early, then gave it away with a pair of spins on the damp track.

PROTOTYPE CHALLENGE

■ Well organized and very fast at Daytona, the **JDC-Miller team** is the favorite.

GT LE MANS

■ With drivers Nick Tandy and Patrick Pilet, how do you not bet on the No. 911 factory **Porsche 911 RSR**?

GT DAYTONA

■ The latest global GT3 specs have brought in new teams and cars, but Andy Lally and John Potter (half the winning Rolex 24 **Magnus Racing team**) know the series and the tracks.

Tudor, meanwhile, signed for 10 more years as “Official Timepiece of IMSA,” and parent Rolex signed for a 10-year partnership as an official sponsor at Sebring International Raceway, after announcing a 10-year extension of its entitlement sponsorship of the Rolex 24 at Daytona early last year.

Scott Atherton, boss of the WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, welcomes MacNeil’s unconventional approach. “David challenged us,” Atherton told Autoweek. “He said, ‘Look, I’m not your traditional sponsor. I’m not interested in a run-of-the-mill approach.’ He said, ‘If and when you can offer us something truly unique and breakthrough, I’m interested.’ Through a combination of things that occurred, we were able to approach him with the opportunity to put the WeatherTech brand on the entire championship. Without going into too much detail, he would probably say that you had me at ‘hello.’” 🍷

RETURN OF THE GT

FORD GT CAPTURES THE IMAGINATION BEFORE IT EVER TAKES A GREEN FLAG

■ The massive crowds surrounding the two Ford GTs on the grid at the Rolex 24 at Daytona—before the car had ever turned a wheel in competition—pointed to the popularity of the effort and was even credited with helping to bring in the largest crowd in memory for the race.

The impetus for the two-car Ford GT program was the company’s fervent desire to win at the 24 Hours of Le Mans on the 50th anniversary of that feat, but the

fact that the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship is where the team earns its stripes for Le Mans is a massive boon to the series.

The team will continue to race in the IMSA series for the rest of the season, going after the championship, and will likely do so again in 2017 as the company is suggesting that the Ford GT racing program will have at least a two-year lifespan.

Ford executives admit

they learned a lesson watching Nissan last year—the company touted its new race car as all but a shoo-in for a Le Mans victory but ended up tucking its tail between its legs and folding the program after a dreadful year.

That won’t happen at Ford—the GT engine, for example, is the proven EcoBoost unit from the Daytona Prototype car—but the problems the GT suffered at Daytona, all of which were entirely unexpected following days of uneventful testing, humbled the team and will make victory sweeter when it finally does come. —SCS



For more IMSA information throughout the season, go to autoweek.com/racing/imsa and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA



ON THE RISE

■ Nobody is hungrier for wins and podium finishes than the two-car **Mazda Prototype** team. Stuck with a boat-anchor diesel engine the past two years, a proven gas-fed four-cylinder powerplant this season gives the team—Jonathan Bomarito, Tristan Nunez, Tom Long and Joel Miller are the primary drivers, and IndyCar driver Spencer Pigot and sports-car veteran Ben Devlin joined the team for the Rolex 24—the speed it needs to compete.

2015 IMSA TUDOR UNITED SPORTSCAR FINAL STANDINGS

PROTOTYPE

1.	João Barbosa	309
1.	Christian Fittipaldi	309
2.	Michael Valiante	306
2.	Richard Westbrook	306
3.	Dane Cameron	304
3.	Eric Curran	304
4.	Joey Hand	301
4.	Scott Pruett	301
5.	Jordan Taylor	292
5.	Ricky Taylor	292

GT LE MANS

1.	Patrick Pilet	315
2.	Bill Auberlen	305
2.	Dirk Werner	305
3.	Antonio Garcia	295
3.	Jan Magnussen	295
4.	Giancarlo Fisichella	293
4.	Pierre Kaffer	293
5.	John Edwards	291
5.	Lucas Luhr	291

GT DAYTONA

1.	Townsend Bell	281
1.	Bill Sweedler	281
2.	Christina Nielsen	279
3.	Christopher Haase	277

3.	Dion Von Moltke	277
4.	Mario Farnbacher	267
4.	Ian James	267
5.	Patrick Lindsey	266
5.	Spencer Pumpelly	266

PROTOTYPE CHALLENGE

1.	Jon Bennett	318
1.	Colin Braun	318
2.	Mike Guasch	313
2.	Tom Kimber-Smith	313
3.	Chris Cumming	301
3.	Bruno Junqueira	301
4.	Mikhail Goikhberg	285
5.	Renger van der Zande	268

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

■ After having never competed in the series before, Lamborghini will dominate the GT Daytona class. Those guys are just too hungry.

■ In GT Le Mans, this will be the Chevrolet Corvette’s year (yeah, we know, after the dominating one-two victory at the 2016 Rolex 24 at Daytona, this doesn’t seem as bold as when we typed it a few weeks ago). Expect Corvette Racing to also be a force at Le Mans, where it scored a class victory in 2015.

■ The No. 5 Action Express Mustang Sampling Chevrolet Corvette Daytona Prototype, the only season champion this series has ever seen, won’t repeat in 2016.

2016 IMSA WEATHERTECH SPORTSCAR CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULE

JAN. 30-31	Daytona
MARCH 16-19	Sebring
APRIL 15-16	Long Beach
APRIL 29-MAY 1	Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca
JUNE 3-4	Belle Isle Park
JUNE 30-JULY 3	Watkins Glen
JULY 8-10	Canadian Tire Motorsport Park
JULY 22-23	Lime Rock
AUG. 4-7	Road America
AUG. 26-28	Virginia
SEPT. 15-18	Circuit of the Americas
SEPT. 28-OCT. 1	Road Atlanta



FRESH START FUELS TOYOTA HYBRID

JAPANESE MARQUE DOMINATED WEC
IN 2014 ONLY TO FALL OFF THE PACE IN '15

BY GARY WATKINS

Q TOYOTA WENT FROM HERO TO zero in the space of a winter offseason. The Japanese marque finished 2014 with the World Endurance Championship drivers' and manufacturers' titles in its pocket and headed into the 2015 season with the realization that it had little chance of retaining either. That resulted in a decision to produce an all-new LMP1 contender from a blank sheet of paper for the coming season.

Its plans for 2016 were already ambitious: Toyota was working a car with a new hybrid energy storage system, a battery in place of the super-capacitor it has used since its return to top-flight sports-car racing in 2012. These had to be revised at an early juncture last year.

Toyota showed a bit of form last season on the way to third place with its upgraded TS040 Hybrid in the series opener at Silverstone in April—but after being outgunned by its rivals at Spa in May, it came to the conclusion that there was little hope for the season ahead. That meant plans for a new engine, originally scheduled for 2017, were brought forward 12 months and announced for this season in the week of the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

A tight schedule was set to complete its TS050 Hybrid in time for Toyota's traditional preseason shakedown in early January. The target was indeed hit, and the new car was put through its paces at the MotorLand Aragón circuit.

Photographs and technical details of the car have yet to be released—look for those in late March. The configuration of the gas

engine has never been disclosed, though the Toyota Motorsport GmbH squad has talked about it being a turbocharged unit.

There's little secret that it is a small-capacity V4 of similar configuration to the engine that took Porsche to WEC honors last season, but it would be wrong to call Toyota a copycat. Porsche regenerates energy from exhaust gases not required to drive the turbo; Toyota will be sticking with the twin-axle kinetic energy-recovery system used over the past two seasons.

The big question is whether Toyota can close the gap on its German rivals in the LMP1 class. It's a question that can't be answered now, just as TMG didn't know 12 months ago whether its improved TS040 would be enough to keep it ahead in 2015. The car gained nearly two seconds on its predecessors at most tracks but still fell behind an all-new Porsche and a radical update of the Audi.

This time, it is Toyota and Audi that have produced all-new machines and Porsche that has opted for an update. The battle dynamic at the front of the WEC field could change again. Predictions are futile until the cars meet on the track. 🏁

24 HOURS OF LE MANS OVERVIEW

FORD CELEBRATES
50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF HISTORIC WIN

■ FIFTIETH BIRTHDAYS NEED to be marked somehow. Thankfully, Ford has taken that on board and is organizing one hell of a party for this year's 24 Hours of Le Mans, the half-century anniversary of the first of its four consecutive outright victories in the French endurance classic.

Ford has built a modern incar-

nation of the line of cars that claimed wins in 1966-69, and with racing in mind, it plans to have four of the machines on the grid in the GTE Pro class for Le Mans, June 18-19. The two cars competing under the Ford Chip Ganassi Racing banner in the WEC are based in the U.K. and are set to be joined by the team's

two U.S.-based cars racing in the GT Le Mans class of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

Nissan is not racing in LMP1 this year, and two other contenders—Porsche and Audi—have jointly agreed to cut their Le Mans entries from three cars to two.

—GW

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NEWCOMER TO WATCH

■ Ex-Formula 3, GP2 and Formula One driver **Kamui Kobayashi** could bring Toyota's second entry alive on his promotion to a race seat from a test and reserve role following the retirement of Alex Wurz. The big question is whether Stéphane Sarrazin and Mike Conway can win in Toyota's top entry.



OUR PICKS (LE MANS/OVERALL)

■ **Audi** will return to the winner's circle at Le Mans, but the championship will be **Porsche's** again. The latest R18 e-tron quattro is going to be super-competitive in the 24 Hours, but there have to be doubts over its form in the shorter races at F1-style tracks. And expect **Chevrolet** to make it two in a row at Le Mans in GTE Pro.



ON THE RISE

■ Frenchman **Olivier Pla** finally got the break he deserves with a full-time ride with Ford. The former single-seater driver's previous factory deals either failed to materialize (with Peugeot before it pulled out of the WEC ahead of 2012) or turned sour (Nissan only raced once last year), so this has been a long time coming.



LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC (3)/WEC

2015 RECAP

■ **PORSCHE CLAIMED A 17TH VICTORY AT THE 24 Hours of Le Mans** with one version of its all-new 919 Hybrid and remained unbeaten over the second half of the season with a high-downforce version of the car on its way to both the drivers' and manufacturers' championships. Audi never gave up, however, and kept the drivers' championship race alive deep into the eighth and final race in Bahrain.

2015 WEC FINAL STANDINGS

PROTOTYPE

1.	Brandon Hartley	166
1.	Mark Webber	166
1.	Timo Bernhard	166
2.	André Lotterer	161
2.	Benoît Tréluyer	161
2.	Marcel Fassler	161
3.	Marc Lieb	138.5
3.	Neel Jani	138.5
3.	Romain Dumas	138.5

GT

1.	Richard Lietz	145
2.	Gianmaria Bruni	131.5
2.	Toni Vilander	131.5
3.	Michael Christensen	127

LMP2

1.	Julien Canal	178
1.	Roman Rusinov	178
1.	Sam Bird	178
2.	Matthew Howson	155
2.	Richard Bradley	155
3.	Gustavo Yacamán	134
3.	Ricardo Gonzalez	134
3.	Luis Felipe Derani	134

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

■ All three P1 manufacturers—Audi, Porsche and Toyota—will win a least one race.

■ Ford and its Chip Ganassi Racing drivers Marino Franchitti, Stefan Mücke, Olivier Pla and Andy Priaulx will outperform its rivals in year one of its program with the new GT.

■ James Calado, former Formula One Force India driver, will emerge as a real GTE star on his promotion to the lead Ferrari.

2016 WEC SCHEDULE

APRIL 17	Silverstone
MAY 7	Spa-Francorchamps
JUNE 18-19	Le Mans
JULY 24	Nürburgring
SEPT. 3	Mexico City
SEPT. 17	Circuit of the Americas
OCT. 16	Fuji
NOV. 6	Shanghai
NOV. 19	Bahrain



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\\ 2014-2015 RECAP

■ **ENERGY MANAGEMENT IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS** IN Formula E. The Nextev Team China Racing crew and lead driver Nelson Piquet Jr. best cracked that particular nut. An amazing comeback from a poor qualifying for the second race at the doubleheader finale in London gave him the title by a solitary point.

Renault e.dams driver Sébastien Buemi—the only driver to win three times during the season—would have been champion but for a pit-lane infraction that cost him the win in Moscow.



ON THE RISE

■ **Robin Frijns** has been a winner in every type of car he's raced. He won the Formula Renault 3.5 title in 2012 and was the champion last year in the Blancpain GT Series.



OUR PICK

■ **Sébastien Buemi** has the best car under him with the Renault e.dams squad and should roll to the championship. He's currently the all-time leader in series wins with five.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- The title battle will be an affair exclusively fought out between Renault e.dams and Abt Audi Sport.
- The 2016-17 calendar will feature more than the current 10 rounds.
- Expect a landslide of new manufacturers to announce intentions to join the series. The FIA confirmed in December that Jaguar will join the series as a new manufacturer for 2016-17.

CURRENT STANDINGS (THROUGH FOUR ROUNDS)

Sébastien Buemi	80
Lucas di Grassi	76
Sam Bird	52
Loïc Duval	32
Jérôme D'Ambrosio	30

REMAINING 2015-16 SCHEDULE

MARCH 12	Mexico City
APRIL 2	Long Beach, CA
APRIL 23	Paris
MAY 21	Berlin
JUNE 4	Moscow
JULY 3	London



FUTURE WORLD

FORMULA E FOLLOWS ROAD TO GOAL

BY GARY WATKINS

■ **FORMULA E SET** out on a course in 2015-16—the second season of the FIA electric-vehicle series—that will eventually end of the practice of each driver swapping to a second car to complete a race. The first step for year two, which kicked off in Beijing in September, was to allow teams to produce their own electric powertrains and enjoy a small increase in power outputs.

This is all part of a new road map pointing toward single-car races.

The initial plan called for teams to be able to develop their own batteries, in place of the spec unit produced by Williams Advanced Engineering, for season three. That has been dropped in favor of a new one-make battery from the sister company of the Williams Formula One team for seasons three and four. A scheduled increase in power for season three has also been abandoned.

The introduction of a single car was scheduled for 2018-19 in the original road

map laid out early last year, but teams believe this could be a year too early. However, FIA president Jean Todt feels the date should be moved forward rather than back.

That's a strategy that could sit well with some of the manufacturers waiting in the wings to join the Formula E grid. BMW has stated that car-swapping sends the wrong message about the range of electric vehicles.

Freeing up the rules to allow manufacturers to showcase their technology will be key for Formula E as the series develops from its one-make roots. Indian car-maker Mahindra, Monégasque electric supercar builder Venturi, Audi with the Abt team, and Renault signed up for season one. Citroën sub-brand DS has joined them all for 2015-16, while Jaguar announced this past December that it would enter the fray in 2016-17 in a partnership with Williams.

Series boss Alejandro Agag predicts that a landslide of manufacturers is waiting to join the series. But it is a question of when, not if, others come along. 🏎️



For more Formula E information, go to autoweek.com/racing and follow us on Twitter @ AutoweekUSA

SPEED VISION

SCOTT SPEED, VW ENJOY SUCCESS IN NEW HOME

BY ALANIS KING

□ MUCH OF SCOTT SPEED'S racing career has been an inconsistent narrative. He's jumped from discipline to discipline, usually failing to settle down for more than a few years.

Winning the Red Bull Global Rallycross championship title, though—that was a comeback story.

A driver who's competed in Formula One, NASCAR, IndyCar, ARCA and Formula E, Speed gave the GRC a try in 2013, winning his first series start. In 2015, he won a series championship, giving Volkswagen Andretti Rallycross the checkered flag at the finale.

"I think what made the GRC championship so special was the fact that

we had to come from so far behind," Speed said. "We did well in the first race, and obviously, we won (the) X Games (no-points race), but that didn't really count."

Ken Block led the points much of the season, but a series of crashes and bad luck dropped him to seventh.

"Ken is easily pretty good for one or two big chunks over the weekend, but from a championship perspective, he can have a hard time," Speed said.

Speed believes GRC is the next big thing in American motorsports; he expects more drivers from other racing disciplines to give the series a shot.

"It'll be exciting to see how it plays out, and what the future holds here," Speed said. 🏆



For more Global Rallycross information throughout the season, go to autoweek.com/racing/rally and follow us on Twitter @AutoweekUSA



ON THE RISE

■ **Patrik Sandell** finished eighth in the 2015 GRC standings, but set high expectations for this season. The Bryan Herta Rallysport Ford Performance driver managed five top-five finishes and a win across 12 races. As the season progressed, champion Speed said he felt Sandell was his biggest title challenger—perhaps a telling sign for 2016 success.



OUR PICK

■ It's hard to bet against **Scott Speed** for a second straight title. He is under contract with Andretti Autosport through 2017 and figures to be a driver to beat for at least the next few seasons. He set the pace early in his GRC career—winning his first start in 2013—and hasn't slowed down. He had three victories in 2015 and was on the podium for eight of 12 points races.

\ 2015 RECAP

SCOTT SPEED TOOK VOLKSWAGEN AND ANDRETTI Autosport to the top in the team's second GRC season. Meanwhile, Speed's teammate Tanner Foust came into the finale with a shot at the championship or at least a 1-2 finish for Andretti, but he finished ninth in the finale to allow Sebastian Eriksson to sneak into second place in the championship.

BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

- Steve Arpin claims his first win.
- Scott Speed wins the most races.
- Ford's streak of five manufacturers' titles ends in 2016.

2015 FINAL STANDINGS

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----|
| 1. | Scott Speed | 456 |
| 2. | Sebastian Eriksson | 400 |
| 3. | Tanner Foust | 388 |

2015 GRC LIGHTS STANDINGS

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----|
| 1. | Oliver Eriksson | 501 |
| 2. | Austin Cindric | 473 |
| 3. | Miles Maroney | 441 |

2016 RED BULL GLOBAL RALLYCROSS SCHEDULE

MAY 21-22	NBCSN
Phoenix	
JUNE 4	NBCSN
Dallas	
JUNE 18-19	NBCSN
Daytona	
JULY 2-3	NBCSN
Military Base (Site TBA)	
JULY 30	NBCSN
Washington DC	
AUG. 28	NBCSN
TBA	
SEPT. 17	NBCSN
Seattle	
OCT. 8-9	NBCSN
Los Angeles	

NOT DONE YET

A HANDFUL OF OTHER RACING SERIES YOU'LL WANT TO CHECK OUT THIS YEAR

BY AUTOWEEK STAFF



INDY LIGHTS

■ SPENCER PIGOT HAS moved on, Santiago Urrutia and Neil Alberico have moved up. That's the scene setter for the Indy Lights season.

Pigot, pictured above, is now in IndyCar after winning six Indy Lights races and the title in '15 for Juncos Racing. Urrutia or Alberico could fill the void, the pair finishing 1-2 last year in Pro Mazda.

Urrutia is driving for the Schmidt Peterson Motorsports with Curb-Agajanian team that has won eight Indy Lights entrant titles, including last year's.

Urrutia won three Pro Mazda races last year to take the championship by 53 points. His new teammate is RC Enerson. Alberico led Pro Mazda last year with four race wins; his new digs are with Carlin Motorsport, also fielding Ed Jones and Felix Serralles.

2015 CHAMPION

Spencer Pigot

2016 INDY LIGHTS SCHEDULE

MARCH 12-13	NBCSN
St. Petersburg, FL	
APRIL 2	NBCSN
Phoenix	
APRIL 23-24	NBCSN
Birmingham, AL	
MAY 13-14	NBCSN
Indianapolis	
MAY 27	NBCSN
Indianapolis	
JUNE 25-26	NBCSN
Elkhart Lake, WI	
JULY 10	NBCSN
Newton, IA	
JULY 16-17	NBCSN
Toronto	
JULY 30-31	NBCSN
Lexington, OH	
SEPT. 4	NBCSN
Boston	
SEPT. 10-11	NBCSN
Monterey, CA	

ARCA

■ THE ARCA RACING

Series remains professional stock-car racing's cult classic, and its future remains bright entering the 2016 season. This is the second year the division is using a cost-cutting spec motor, and car counts in the series are expected to rise as a result.

Defending champion Grant Enfinger has graduated to NASCAR's Camping World Truck Series but talented characters like Matt Kurzejewski, Tommy Hessert and Josh Williams are likely to carry the torch and compete for the championship. Emerging top prospects—15-year-olds Christian Eckes and Todd Gilliland—also will see time behind the wheel in races in which they are age eligible.

The ARCA schedule is the most diverse in motorsports, running eight superspeedways, eight short tracks, two dirt

tracks and a single road course. ARCA has something for everyone in 2016.

2015 CHAMPION

Grant Enfinger

2016 ARCA RACING SERIES SCHEDULE

FEB. 13	(FS1) Daytona Beach
APRIL 9	Nashville
APRIL 24	Salem, IN
APRIL 29	(FS1) Talladega
MAY 22	Toledo, OH
MAY 28	Millville, NJ
JUNE 3	(FS1) Long Pond, PA
JUNE 10	(FS1) Brooklyn, MI
JUNE 19	Madison, WI
JUNE 26	Winchester, IN
JULY 9	(FS2) Newton, IA
JULY 22	(FS1) Brownsburg, IN
JULY 29	(FS1) Long Pond, PA
AUG. 6	Marne, MI
AUG. 21	Springfield, IL
SEPT. 4	Du Quoin, IL
SEPT. 10	Salem, IN
SEPT. 15	(FS1) Joliet, IL
SEPT. 23	(FS2) Sparta, KY
OCT. 14	(FS1) Kansas City, KS

TRANS AM

■ THE 2016 TRANS AM

Series should show continued growth, as the tour expands to include five separate divisions. In addition to the marquee TA and TA2, Trans Am has now expanded the reach of the former TA3 to include TA3, TA4 and TA5 in response to increased interest.

TA3 now features cars previously included in the International Group. It includes, but is not restricted to, Aston Martin GT4s, BMW M3/E46/E36s, Chevrolet Corvettes and Dodge Vipers. TA4 has cars previously eligible for TA3, taking in the age-old production battle between the Chevrolet Camaro, the Ford Mustang and the Dodge Challenger.

Trans Am hopes to replicate the "Pony Wars" that made the series a hit when it first debuted.

TA5 intends to accommodate the growing Porsche community; it runs Hoosier Racing Tire slicks rather than the DOT tires the rest of the TA3 class runs.

2015 CHAMPIONS

TA: Amy Ruman
TA2: Gar Robinson
TA3 AMERICAN MUSCLE: Ernie Francis Jr.
TA3 INTERNATIONAL: Lee Saunders

2016 TRANS AM SERIES SCHEDULE

MARCH 4-5	Sebring, FL
APRIL 9-10	Brazelton, GA
MAY 14-15	Watkins Glen, NY
JUNE 10-12	Millville, NJ
JULY 2-3	Brainerd, MN
AUG. 11-13	Lexington, OH
AUG. 25-27	Elkhart Lake, WI
SEPT. 23-24	Alton, VA
OCT. 8-10	Homestead, FL

PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE

■ THE 2016 SEASON, THE Pirelli World Challenge's 27th, could be the most viewed in the competitive, entertaining series' history.

PWC's most notable story is Cadillac and Johnny O'Connell's domination. The 53-year-old, right, has won the last four GT class titles and has shown no signs of slowing down in the closing stages of his career.

Diversity and participation remain Pirelli World Challenge staples, as seven classes remain on the docket this season—GT, GTA, GT Cup, GTS, Touring Car, TCA and TCB.

All told, more than 100 entries are expected to compete in 2016.

2015 CHAMPIONS

GT: Johnny O'Connell
GTA: Frank Montecalvo
GT Cup: Colin Thompson
GTS: Michael Cooper
TC: Corey Fergus
TCS: Jason Wolfe



2016 PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE SCHEDULE

March 3-6	CBSSN*	May 27-27	CBSSN
Austin, TX		Lakeville, CT	
March 11-13	CBSSN	June 23-26	CBSSN
St. Petersburg, FL		Elkhart Lake, WI	
April 15-17	CBSSN	July 29-30	CBSSN
Long Beach, CA		Lexington, OH	
April 22-24	CBSSN	Aug. 12-14	CBSSN
Birmingham, AL		Tooele, UT	
May 19-22	CBSSN	Sept. 16-18	CBSSN
Bowmanville, ONT		Sonoma, CA	
		Oct. 7-9	CBSSN
		Monterey, CA	

*CBSSN = CBS Sports Network

IMSA CONTINENTAL TIRE SPORTSCAR CHALLENGE



■ THE SPORTSCAR

Challenge series is guaranteed a new Grand Sport champion, as defending titlists Andrew Davis and Robin Liddell with Stevenson Motorsports have graduated to the WeatherTech SportsCar Championship.

The GS division is struggling to find participants—only eight cars started the season opener at Daytona. Perhaps offsetting those concerns is the ST class; it had 20-plus cars start Daytona.

This season has a diverse schedule, including many of road racing's premiere venues such as Sebring, Laguna Seca and Watkins Glen.

NASCAR K&N EAST/WEST

■ THE K&N SERIES HAS been NASCAR's best-kept secret over the past several years, providing a platform for developing drivers while also delivering among the best overall on-track products in racing.

K&N is really just glorified Late Model racing, but the tracks are some of the best in short track. Top prospects racing at classic venues like Bowman Gray Stadium and Greenville Pickens Stadium makes for a neat dichotomy, especially since many series winners work their way to the top levels of NASCAR. Enjoy Harrison Burton, Todd Gilliland, Justin Haley and Tyler Dippel while you can—based on the success of some recent tour grads, they aren't long for K&N.

EAST

2015 NASCAR K&N EAST CHAMPION

William Byron

2016 NASCAR K&N EAST SERIES SCHEDULE

FEB. 14	New Smyrna Beach, FL
MARCH 12	Mobile, AL
MARCH 26	Easley, SC
APRIL 16	Bristol, TN
APRIL 30	Alton, VA
MAY 30	Thornburg, VA
JUNE 17	Stafford Spring, CT
JULY 2	Columbus, OH
JULY 16	Loudon, NH
JULY 29	Newton, IA
AUG. 5	Watkins Glen, NY
SEPT. 5	Easley, SC
SEPT. 17	Millville, NJ
SEPT. 30	Dover, DE

WEST

2015 NASCAR K&N WEST CHAMPION

Chris Eggleston

2016 NASCAR K&N WEST SERIES SCHEDULE

MARCH 19	Irwindale, CA
APRIL 2	Bakersfield, CA
MAY 7	Tucson, AZ
MAY 21	San Bernardino, CA
JUNE 11	Dacono, CO
JUNE 25	Sonoma, CA
JULY 9	Post Falls, ID
JULY 29	Newton, IA
AUG. 13	Monroe, WA
AUG. 27	Roseburg, OR
SEPT. 10-11	Tooele, UT
SEPT. 24	Meridian, ID
OCT. 15	Roseville, CA

2015 CHAMPIONS

GRAND SPORT

Andrew Davis
Robin Liddell

STREET TUNER

Steve McAleer
Chad McCumbee

2016 SCHEDULE

JAN. 27-29	Daytona Beach, FL
MARCH 17-18	Sebring, FL
APRIL 29-30	Monterey, CA
JUNE 30-JULY 2	Watkins Glen
JULY 8-9	Bowmanville, ONT
JULY 22-23	Lakeville, CT
AUG. 5-6	Elkhart Lake, WI
AUG. 26-27	Danville, VA
SEPT. 14-16	Austin, TX
SEPT. 28-30	Braselton, GA

Note: All races will be shown, tape-delayed, on Fox Sports 1.

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QUALITY TOOLS LOWEST PRICES EVERY DAY

SUPER COUPON

20% OFF

ANY SINGLE ITEM

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. Cannot be used with other discount, coupon, or any of the following items or brands: Inside Track Club membership, extended service plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day parking lot sale item, compressors, floor jacks, saw mills, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, trenchers, welders, Admiral, CoverPro, Daytona, Diablo, Franklin, Hercules, Holt, Jupiter, Predator, Slick-Tek, StormCat, Union, Vanguard, Viking. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 6/22/16. Limit one coupon per customer per day.



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WOW SUPER COUPON

CAN AND OBD II PROFESSIONAL SCAN TOOL

LOT 62120 60694 shown

Customer Rating



SAVE \$260

\$89.99

comp at \$349.99



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US GENERAL 26" 16 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET

LOT 61609 67831 shown

Customer Rating



SAVE \$633

\$319.99

comp at \$952.99



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WOW SUPER COUPON

RAPID PUMP® 3 TON LOW PROFILE HEAVY DUTY STEEL FLOOR JACK

SAVE \$85

\$169.99

comp at \$254.99



LOT 60049/62326 62670/61253 61282 shown

Customer Rating



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EMERGENCY 39 LED TRIANGLE WORKLIGHT

LOT 62158 shown 62417/62514

SAVE 70%

\$299

comp at \$10.11

Batteries included.



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2.5 HP 21 GALLON 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR

LOT 69091/67847 shown 61454/61693/62803

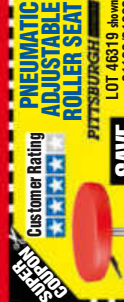
SAVE \$349

\$149.99

comp at \$499



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PNEUMATIC ADJUSTABLE ROLLER SEAT

LOT 46319 shown 61160/61896

SAVE 50%

\$19.99

comp at \$39.99



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WOW SUPER COUPON

4 PIECE 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

LOT 63058/63057/60405/63094 61824/62322/60084 shown

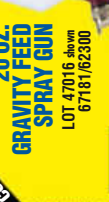
SAVE 63%

\$7.44

comp at \$20.37



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GRAVITY FEED SPRAY GUN

LOT 47016 shown 67181/62300

SAVE 80%

\$9.99

comp at \$49.98



2.4" COLOR LCD DIGITAL INSPECTION CAMERA

LOT 61839/62359 67979 shown

SAVE \$131

\$69.99

comp at \$201.50



20 TON SHOP PRESS

LOT 32879 60603 shown

SAVE \$210

\$159.99

comp at \$369.99



1/2" ELECTRIC IMPACT WRENCH

LOT 69606/61173 68099 shown

SAVE \$109

\$39.99

comp at \$149.88



TORQUE WRENCHES



Customer Rating



Accuracy within .4%

YOUR CHOICE

\$11.99

comp at \$29.99

SAVE 60%

12 VOLT, 10/25 AMP BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER

LOT 66783/60581/62334 60653 shown

SAVE 57%

\$29.99

comp at \$69.99

72" x 80" MOVING BLANKET

LOT 66537 shown 68005/62418

SAVE 66%

\$5.99

comp at \$17.97

Customer Rating



1/2" ELECTRIC IMPACT WRENCH

LOT 69606/61173 68099 shown

SAVE \$109

\$39.99

comp at \$149.88

Customer Rating



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

FREE

WITH ANY PURCHASE
**TAPE
MEASURE**
PITTSBURGH

\$4.97
VALUE



LOT 69030/69031 shown

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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

6" DIGITAL CALIPER
PITTSBURGH

LOT 47257 shown
61585/62387

• SAE and Metric

SAVE 63%



Customer Rating
★★★★★

\$10.99 comp at \$29.99

Includes two 1.5V SR44 button cell batteries.

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PREDATOR
4000 PEAK/3200 RUNNING WATTS
6.5 HP (212 CC) GAS GENERATORS
CALIFORNIA ONLY

LOT 63079/69729 shown
63080/69676 shown

SAVE \$179

\$289.99 comp at \$469



SUPER QUIET

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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

12" SLIDING COMPOUND DOUBLE-BEVEL MITER SAW WITH LASER GUIDE
CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

LOT 69684 shown
61776/61969/61970

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$264



\$134.99 comp at \$399



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

26" 4 DRAWER TOOL CART
IS-B GENERAL

LOT 95559 shown
61634/61952

• 580 lb. capacity

SAVE \$250



Customer Rating
★★★★★

\$99.99 comp at \$349.99

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32 PIECE SCREWDRIVER SET
PITTSBURGH

LOT 61259/90764 shown

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 59%

\$5.99 comp at \$14.97



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WOW

SUPER COUPON

1 TON CAPACITY FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE
PITTSBURGH

LOT 61858/69512 shown
69445 shown

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$169



• Includes Ram, Hook and Chain

\$999.99 ~~\$1799.99~~ comp at \$269



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES
HARDY

Customer Rating
★★★★★

Item 68498 shown

SAVE 59%

\$5.99 comp at \$14.97



• 5 mil thickness

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3 TON HEAVY DUTY STEEL JACK STANDS
PITTSBURGH

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 42%

\$19.99 comp at \$34.99



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

2 PIECE VEHICLE WHEEL DOLLIES
PITTSBURGH

LOT 60343 shown
67338 shown

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$50



• 1500 lb. capacity

\$49.99 comp at \$99.99



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

60 LED SOLAR SECURITY LIGHT
Includes 6V, 900 mAh NiCd battery pack.

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 54%

\$31.99 comp at \$69.99



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440 LB. CAPACITY ELECTRIC HOIST
PITTSBURGH

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$70

\$79.99 comp at \$149.99



• With Remote Control

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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

MULTI-USE TRANSFER PUMP
PITTSBURGH

LOT 63144/62961/63076/61364/66418 shown

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 68%

\$4.99 comp at \$15.99



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WOW SUPER COUPON

RETRACTABLE AIR HOSE REEL WITH 3/8" x 50 FT. HOSE
LOT 93897 shown
69265/62344

SAVE \$107

\$58.99 comp at \$166



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SCISSOR **SUPER COUPON**

10 FT. x 20 FT. PORTABLE CAR CANOPY
LOT 60726/69034 shown
63054/62857 62858

SAVE \$79



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4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER
drillmaster

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE 58%

\$11.99 comp at \$29.97



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Clint Brawner, right, was a mechanic who prepped cars for Bill Vukovich and A.J. Foyt steered the Hawks through a '60s run capped by Andretti's win.

IMS MEDIA (2)

INDY SHAPED BY MORE THAN JUST RACERS

AUTOWEEK BREAKS DOWN SOME OF THE WELL-KNOWN AND NOT-SO-WELL-KNOWN INDIANAPOLIS LEGENDS



THE INDIANAPOLIS 500 IS A COLLECTION OF 758 starting drivers folded into 99 races over 105 years, led by the likes of A.J. Foyt, Mario Andretti, Rick Mears and the Unsers—and those are just the influencers most of you know about. But what about those who impacted the legendary race in ways less chronicled? These are the Lem Trotters and Clarence Cagles, the Carl Fishers and Joe Cloutiers. Before Jim Nabors became a fixture on an Indianapolis Motor Speedway microphone, the dulcet tones of Tom Carnegie and Sid Collins could be heard.

The 500 is more than Granatelli, Gurney and Guthrie; Gable and Garner are there, too. And before the race was dominated by cars owned by Roger Penske and Chip Ganassi, Duesenbergs and Millers paced the field. Lou Moore was an influential driver and car owner. Add Alberto Ascari and Nigel Mansell to the list of European drivers as important to the 500's success as Jim Clark and Graham Hill. We've gathered 100 names; here are 50:

BILLY ARNOLD: Only raced in the 500 five times but led three for a total of 410 laps, a figure still ranking 12th all-time. Won from pole in 1930.

J.C. AGAJANIAN: Aggie's Indy winners were Troy Ruttman and Parnelli Jones.

GEORGE BIGNOTTI: Winningest chief mechanic in race history (seven from 1961-83).

CLINT BRAWNER: Mechanic who prepped cars for Bill Vukovich and A.J. Foyt steered the Hawks through a '60s run capped by Andretti's win.

CLARENCE CAGLE: Was recruited by Tony Hulman to rework the dilapidated Speedway after World War II, and he worked another 30-plus years. IMS Hall of Fame Museum was one of his final projects.

COLIN CHAPMAN: After his rear-engine Lotus won in 1965 with Jim Clark, no front-engine car would win Indy again.

GASTON CHEVROLET: Kid brother of the Chevrolet clan and the only one to win the 500 as a driver (1920).

JOE CLOUTIER: Was Tony Hulman's right-hand man, leading the Speedway transformation after WWII, and he succeeded Hulman as president in 1977.



SID COLLINS: The original Voice of the 500 who coined phrase "Greatest Spectacle in Racing."

DONALD DAVIDSON: IMS historian saw his first 500 in 1964.

RALPH DEPALMA: Italian-born driver was considered the most successful U.S.-based driver of



ANOTHER SEASON ANOTHER CHANCE TO MAKE HISTORY



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FIRESTONE GRAND PRIX OF ST. PETERSBURG
Tune in 3.13.16 at 12:30 PM ET on ABC

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Official Tire of the Verizon IndyCar Series



verizon
indycar
series

James Garner (in the driver's seat) and Toshio Mifune (working on the engine) star in the Oscar-winning 1966 movie "Grand Prix."



GETTY IMAGES; JMS MEDIA

the sport's earliest days. His only win came in 1915, but he led 196 of 200 laps in 1912. Won two poles.

PETER DEPAOLO: The 1925 winner was the first to complete 500 miles in less than five hours, thus averaging better than 100 mph.

MARK DONOHUE: The first of Roger Penske's 11 drivers to win the 500.

CARL FISHER: Entrepreneur was the leader of a group financing and building the

Speedway. He convinced partners to install 3.2 million bricks for the racing surface, creating "the Brickyard."

KEVIN FORBES: The track's director of engineering for most of the past 25 years.

CLARK GABLE: Legendary actor was an old friend of Tony Hulman's, and he is pictured in an iconic 1947 photograph of turn one. Also starred in racing movie "To Please a Lady."

JAMES GARNER: As Bobby Rahal notes, few had more of

an influence on young men wanting to be race-car drivers than James Garner in the 1966 Oscar-winning movie "Grand Prix."

DAN GURNEY: Encouraged Colin Chapman to try Indy, but Gurney never won the race as a driver.

JANET GUTHRIE: First of the nine women to earn a starting spot, although she didn't make it in her first try (1976).

JIM HALL: One-time F1 driver designed the Chaparral that

Johnny Rutherford won with in 1980.

GRAHAM HILL: Won the 500 in his first start, in 1966.

TED HORN: Delivered the most impressive run of 500 success for a non-winner (nine consecutive top-four finishes from 1936-48).

JIM HURTUBISE: The bravest of the brave who set a track record in 1960 but never had a top-10 finish.



GORDON JOHNCOCK: Won the race everyone wanted to forget (1973) and the race no one could forget (1982).

FRANK KURTIS: Designed five race-winning cars from 1950-55.

ARIE LUYENDYK: The Flying Dutchman is best known as a two-time 500 winner, but he also holds the one- and four-lap qualifying records that might never be broken.

REX MAYS: Started on the front row seven times in 12 starts but never won the race.

JIM MCKAY: Veteran broadcaster was ABC's lead announcer 14 times and hosted first live flag-to-flag coverage in 1986.

RICK MEARS: The third member of the four-time winner's club is considered the ultimate Team Penske driver and the icon of his generation for the way he carried himself.

2016 VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES

WHAT DEFINES A LEGEND



2015 INDYCAR SERIES CHAMPION SCOTT DIXON



INDYCAR.COM

FOR LIVE TIMING AND SCORING, UPCOMING RACE
DETAILS AND TO BE PART OF THIS LEGENDARY SEASON.

LOUIS MEYER: As a driver, had several Indy firsts in 1936 (three-time winner, BorgWarner Trophy recipient, drank milk in victory lane). He also co-owned the Offy engine program that won 18 straight 500s.

TOMMY MILTON: The 500's first two-time winner.

LOU MOORE: Never won the 500 as a driver but did so five times as an entrant on either side of World War II.

DANICA PATRICK: More than Indy's most famous female driver, she finished top 10 in six of her seven 500s.

ROGER PENSKE: Easily the most successful team owner in 500 history, with 16 wins among 11 different drivers, but it's noteworthy he turned down a chance to take a rookie test in 1965. That seat went to Mario Andretti.



WILLY T. RIBBS: Broke Indy's color barrier with a 1991 start. Made the field a second time in 1993.

TIM RICHMOND: Only a two-time 500 starter, but Parnelli Jones ranks him as one of the event's best drivers.

EDDIE RICKENBACKER: America's greatest ace and four-time 500 starter is better known at Indy for being track boss from 1927 until he sold to Tony Hulman in 1945.

MAURI ROSE: Only driver to win the 500 on either side of World War II, and his 1941 win



Linda Vaughn: She became synonymous with Indy as Miss Hurst Golden Shifter.

IMS MEDIA (2)

didn't come in the car he sat on the pole with. Became a three-time champion with back-to-back wins in '47 and '48.

TROY RUTTMAN: Continues to be the youngest 500 winner in history. He was 22 years, 80 days when he won in 1952.

WILBUR SHAW: Posted an incredible driving record at Indy (three wins, three seconds and a shared third) and was key to finding Tony Hulman to pur-

chase the track in 1945. Also was first to win back to back.

DEAN SICKING: His group designed the SAFER barrier, first at Indy.

TOM SNEVA: Known more for being the first to break the 200-mph barrier (and winning three poles) than for winning the race in 1983.

JACKIE STEWART: Three-time world champion made only two

500 starts, but he was a TV analyst for 10 races starting in 1971.

TONY STEWART: Hoosier never won his beloved 500 but started on pole as a rookie in 1996 after teammate Scott Brayton died in a crash.

LEM TROTTER: There is always an unsung person in the group, and this is the man who discovered four 80-acre plots of farmland and presented them to his friend, Carl Fisher, to purchase. The rest is history.

BOBBY UNSER: Not only did Big Al's big brother win three 500s, he won them in three different decades ('68, '75 and '81), the only Indy driver to do that.

LINDA VAUGHN: She became synonymous with Indy as Miss Hurst Golden Shifter, a stroke of marketing genius.

BILL VUKOVICH: Won the 1953 and 1954 500s and was leading in 1955 when he was fatally injured in a backstretch flip.

A.J. WATSON: Cars he built won five straight 500s, twice finishing first and second, in the 1950s and '60s. All were roadsters, although he won an award for his first rear-engine design. His last win was in 1964 with another A.J., a driver named Foyt.

SMOKEY YUNICK: It's said Yunick liked stock-car racing but loved competing at Indy. His last innovative effort was a twin-turbo, small-block Chevy that rookie Jerry Karl used to make the 1973 race.

—AUTOWEEK STAFF



For a look at other top names in Indianapolis 500 lore—call it the Autoweek 100—visit bit.ly/aw-100names

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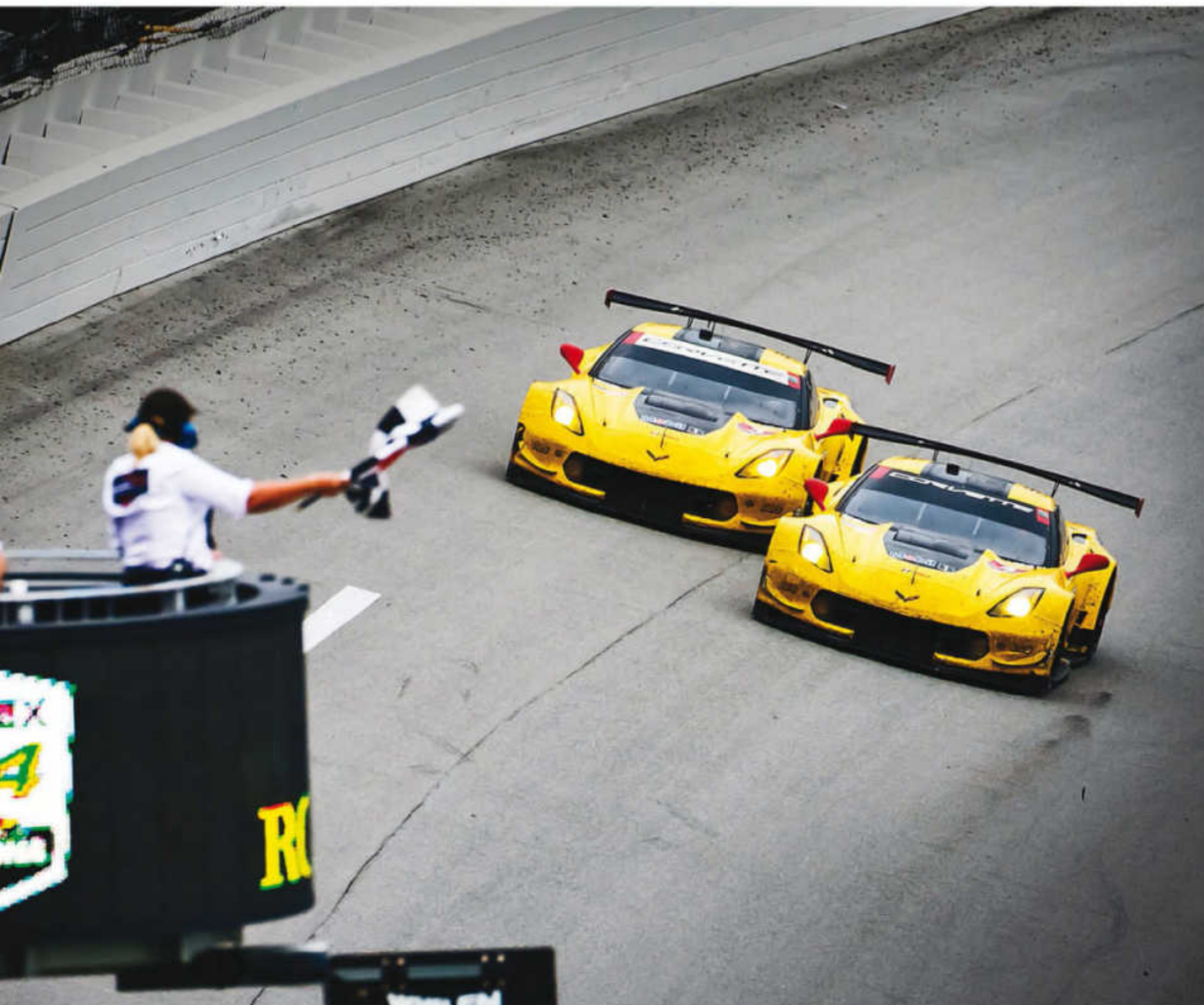
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'MEGA SHOW' AT DAYTONA

CORVETTES RACE TO CLOSEST CLASS FINISH IN ROLEX 24 HISTORY; ESM TAKES OVERALL WIN

BY GARY WATKINS

 CORVETTE RACING allowed its drivers to race and race hard to set up what must have been one of the most thrilling finishes in the Rolex 24 at Daytona's history. What's more,

the finish didn't even need a late-race caution to make it exciting.

The battle for the GT Le Mans class between the Chevrolet Corvette C7.Rs of drivers Oliver Gavin and Antonio Garcia over the final laps of the opening round of the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship was nothing short of

mind-blowing. Gavin was able to hang on to the win, claiming the Rolex Daytona timepieces for himself and teammates Tommy Milner and Marcel Fässler. Gavin won by less than a car length, despite ever so briefly losing the lead at the start of the penultimate lap.

"On the last lap, I was thinking I had just enough on him, but then he towed up behind me," Gavin said. "It was like the (finish) line was just going away from me. I couldn't get there fast enough."

Garcia said the finish was a great way to kick off Corvette Racing's season.

"Oliver is very experienced and didn't make any mistakes, even though I was really pushing him very hard," Garcia said. "We put on a mega show for all the

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Corvette fans. It is amazing that we have a Corvette 1-2. I feel very good about it. I'm happy for Oliver, Tommy and Marcel. We'll be ready to fight back at Sebring."

Chevrolet's faith in its drivers to put on a show when one touch could have handed the win to the factory Porsche in third position was refreshing. Even more amazing was it allowed Garcia to show the C7.R's true pace in a category where the speed of the different cars is matched under the Balance of Performance rules. The Spaniard's string of fastest laps could come back to haunt Corvette Racing later if IMSA decides to dial it back.

Chevrolet's newly arrived homegrown

rival didn't have a good race in the Ford GT's debut. The two Chip Ganassi Racing-run cars had their problems, including an electrical issue resulting in both cars sticking in gear early in the race. Both GTs finished but were a distant 32 and 142 laps behind the winning Chevys. Ford and Multimatic, developing both road and race GTs, admitted disappointment after the race, but stressed there was no need for panic. The GT's ultimate goal is the 24 Hours of Le Mans in June, and there are a lot of race and test miles between now and then.

The Extreme Speed Motorsports squad achieved a lot of Daytona firsts: The

Tequila Patrón-sponsored Ligier-Honda JSP2 shared by Luis Felipe "Pipo" Derani, Scott Sharp, Johannes van Overbeek and, very briefly, Ed Brown, won overall. It was the first win for a French car, the first for Honda and, of course, the first time an LMP2-class car vanquished the Daytona Prototypes in the 24 Hours since the U.S. sports-car racing series merged in 2014.

The second-generation Audi R8 LMS notched a GT Daytona class win courtesy of Magnus Racing. Audi factory driver René Rast had to eke out a tank of fuel to claim the win together with Marco Seefried, Andy Lally and John Potter, but it was close. The Konrad Lamborghini

Clockwise from top: JDC-Miller Motorsports won in the Prototype Challenge category. The Magnus Racing Audi R8 LMS GT3 took care of business in the GT Daytona class. Tequila Patrón ESM was the overall winner and class of the Prototypes at Daytona. However, the Ford GT struggled to stay on the racetrack.



TAKEAWAYS

- LMP2 machinery can now race with the DPs on equal terms, or at least cars using the new 3.5-liter Honda Performance twin-turbo V8 can.
- Governing body IMSA appears to have adopted a less trigger-happy policy on yellow flags. There were no safety-car periods for the Rolex's final two-and-a-half hours.
- The Ford GT doesn't yet have the reliability, but it's fast: Outside Chevrolet's laps in the final hour, the Ford's best laps were comparable to the class competition.



RACING ON TV

FRIDAY, FEB. 26

- NASCAR Xfinity practice, Atlanta; 9 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Camping World Truck practice, Atlanta; 10 a.m., 1:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Sprint Cup practice, Atlanta; 11 a.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Sprint Cup qualifying, Atlanta; 5:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)

SATURDAY, FEB. 27

- NASCAR Xfinity qualifying, Atlanta; 8:30 a.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Sprint Cup practice, Atlanta; 11:30 a.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Xfinity Series Heads Up Georgia 250, Atlanta; 1:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Georgia 200, Atlanta; 4:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NHRA qualifying, Phoenix; 10 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (S)

SUNDAY, FEB. 28

- NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500, Atlanta; 1 p.m., Fox (L)
- Carquest Auto Parts NHRA Nationals, Phoenix; 5 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

- NASCAR Sprint Cup practice, Las Vegas; 1:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Xfinity practice, Las Vegas; 3:30 p.m., 6 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Sprint Cup qualifying, Las Vegas; 7:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)

SATURDAY, MARCH 5

- NASCAR Sprint Cup practice, Las Vegas; 11:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Xfinity qualifying, Las Vegas; 1:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)
- NASCAR Xfinity Series Boyd Gaming 300, Las Vegas; 4 p.m., Fox Sports 1 (L)

SUNDAY, MARCH 6

- NASCAR Sprint Cup Kobalt 400, Las Vegas; 3:30 p.m., Fox (L)

(L) = live, (S) = same day
*All times Eastern

with Fabio Babini at the wheel actually passed him in the closing laps, only to dive into the pits for fuel after the car coughed and sputtered on the banking. Turned out there was enough fuel to complete the race, leaving Rast to hang on to the win by three seconds over Nicky Catsburg in the Black Swan Racing Porsche 911 GT3-R.

The battle for the Prototype Challenge class was muted without the high drama of last year's closing stages. Not one of the eight cars had a clean race—crashing or spinning—and, in fact, caused a number of the 21 yellow flags. The winning JDC-Miller entry of Stephen Simpson,

Chris Miller, Kenton Koch and Misha Goikhberg crashed in the 16th hour. That briefly opened the door for the challengers, but the margin of victory was still four laps.

The PC class is aimed at the amateur, yet the FLM09 spec car is probably the hardest car to drive in the IMSA ranks, thanks to the pendulum effect from the heavy production-car engine out back. There are going to be changes for next month's Sebring 12-hour race, including a lightening program removing 25 pounds from the engine—and the introduction of traction control. They can't come soon enough if Daytona is any indication. 🌩



2016 ROLEX 24 AT DAYTONA PODIUM FINISHERS

PROTOTYPE

- 1. Tequila Patrón ESM**
Honda HPD Ligier JS P2
 - Scott Sharp
 - Johannes van Overbeek
 - Ed Brown
 - Luis Felipe Derani
- 2. Konica Minolta Corvette DP for Wayne Taylor Racing**
Chevrolet Corvette DP
 - Ricky Taylor
 - Max Angelelli
 - Jordan Taylor
 - Rubens Barrichello
- 3. VisitFlorida Racing**
Chevrolet Corvette DP
 - Ryan Dalziel
 - Ryan Hunter-Reay
 - Marc Goossens

GT LE MANS

- 1. Corvette Racing**
Chevrolet Corvette C7.R
 - Oliver Gavin
 - Marcel Fassler
 - Tommy Milner
- 2. Corvette Racing**
Chevrolet Corvette C7.R
 - Antonio Garcia
 - Mike Rockenfeller
 - Jan Magnussen
- 3. Porsche North America**
Porsche 911 RSR
 - Earl Bamber
 - Michael Christensen
 - Frédéric Makowiecki

GT DAYTONA

- 1. Magnus Racing**
Audi R8 LMS GT3
 - John Potter
 - Marco Seefried
 - Andy Lally
 - René Rast
- 2. Black Swan Racing**
Porsche 911 GT3-R
 - Timothy Pappas
 - Patrick Long
 - Nicky Catsburg
 - Andy Pilgrim
- 3. Riley Motorsports**
Dodge Viper GT3-R
 - Ben Keating
 - Jeff Mosing
 - Gar Robinson
 - Eric Foss
 - Damien Faulkner

PROTOTYPE CHALLENGE

- 1. JDC-Miller Motorsports**
Oreca FLM09
 - Chris Miller
 - Stephen Simpson
 - Misha Goikhberg
 - Kenton Koch
- 2. PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports**
Oreca FLM09
 - Robert Alon
 - Jose Gutierrez
 - Tom Kimber-Smith
 - Nicholas Boulle
- 3. BAR1 Motorsports**
Oreca FLM09
 - Tomy Drissi
 - Johnny Mowlem
 - Brendan Gaughan
 - Marc Drumwright
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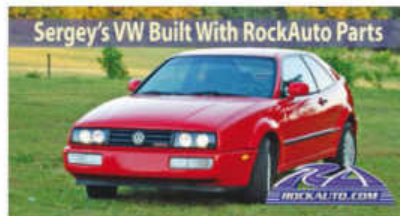
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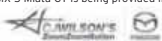
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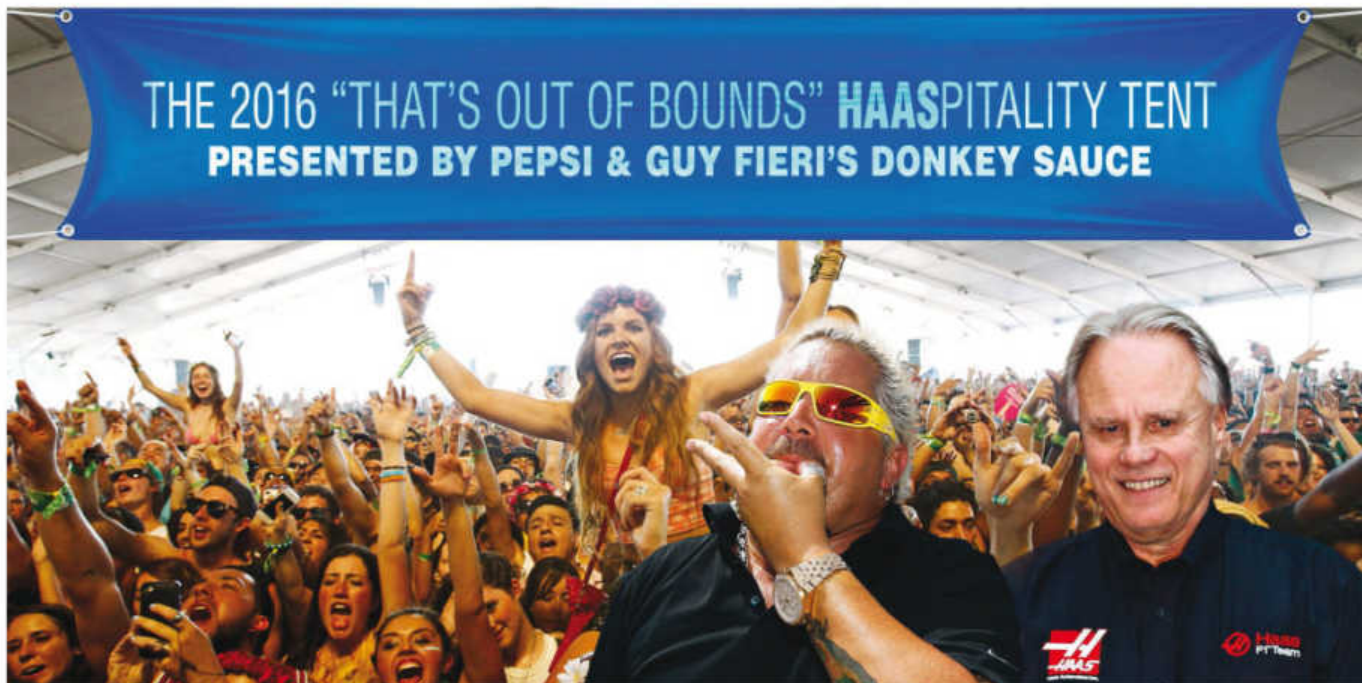


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F1 SWAPS CRUMPETS FOR CORN DOGS

THE NEW HAAS F1 Team doesn't have a driver born and bred in the good ol' US of A (see page 14). OK, OK, that hurts, but ya know what? America isn't just a country, dammit, it's a way of frickin' life, bro. So it's time to show those Euros what that AMERICAN RACING is all about. We have some suggestions:

- It doesn't get more over the top—or OUT OF BOUNDS!—than Guy "Donkey Sauce" Fieri taking over your Haas-pitality® tent and painting it red, white and awesome. Pass the pulled-pork poppers!

- The fun doesn't stop with the American team; we want the whole grid to feel the full breadth of real freedom. That means replacing the typical champagne sponsor with the Champagne of Beers, baby! Tallboys for the crew and keg stands for the winner (Lewis Hamilton, usually).
- While we're at it, F1 needs to step up its sponsor game. Very low energy, right? Let's inject it with some good-ol' American brand power: Smith & Wesson, Walmart, Jack Daniel's—companies that project an unabashed style of American exceptionalism!



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